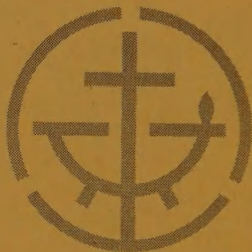


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The Experimental Note

BY

Wilbur Fletcher Sheridan,

Author of

"The Sunday Night Service," "Life of Isaac Wilson Joyce," etc.



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Dedication.

TO HER WHO FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS HAS SHARED THE BURDENS
AND JOYS OF THIS ITINERANT PREACHER'S LIFE

THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.

Religion
Methodist World Service Fund Transferred

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Author's Foreword

THIS book is a study in perspective and proportion. It is an attempt to analyze Church life to-day, and to compare it with the imperishable ideal that glows in the pages of the New Testament. Artists tell us that after long labor at the easel they must leave it for awhile and "wash out their eyes with pure colors," lest their perception of perfect colors become confused. The preacher in the midst of his task finds the same return a necessity. He must hark back to the original tints as fixed by the great Master. Lest the perspective become blurred, he must betake him anew to the first principles of his art. Lest he miss the supreme objective, he must look again into his marching orders and have reiterated the Great Commission. Only so can first things remain first. Only so will he be able to distinguish, as Lowell says, "between the blaze of a tar-barrel and the final conflagration of all things."

The writer disclaims belonging to the tribe of "Young-Man-Afraid-of-His-Horses." He is not apprehensive of the Zeitgeist or of the literary and scientific instruments with which the age works. The era is the greatest in opportunity, and in many noble respects in achievement, that the world has known. But while affirming his optimism, he is not an ostrich optimist. His head is not un-

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der a sand-hummock. Hence he suggests betterment in certain directions. And if a stricture falls now and then on that noblest body of men the world knows—the preachers—be it known that most of all the writer is speaking out loud to himself, and includes brethren only because “love would have its loved ones perfect.”

The author has tried steadily to keep in mind that the value of any review of Church conditions depends less on the strength of criticisms than on the vitality and virility of its constructive ideas.

A considerable part of the material forming this volume has been given in the form of addresses before Preachers' Meetings in New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Chicago, Washington, Baltimore, Kansas City, and Cleveland; and before the Boston Theological Seminary, Garrett Biblical Institute, and various Annual Conferences. A general and seemingly sincere request that the addresses be put into permanent form is responsible for this volume.

CHAPTER I

The Experimental Emphasis

"The character of a Church will always be determined by that of its working clergy." (Phillips Brooks.)

"A preacher's affair is with God, to whom he is accountable and from whom is his reward." (Letter from Robert Browning to John Ruskin, with word "poet" in original changed to "preacher.")

"If it be asked why I have persevered in setting forth views at variance with current creeds, my reply is: It is for each one to utter that which he sincerely believes to be true, and, adding his unit of influence to all other units, leave the results to work themselves out." (Herbert Spencer, "An Autobiography," Vol. II, p. 547.)

"While swings the sea, while mists the mountains shroud,
While thunder's surges burst on banks of cloud,
Still at the prophets' feet the nations sit."

(James Russell Lowell.)

THE EXPERIMENTAL EMPHASIS

It is where we put our emphasis that determines the character of our work. A misplaced emphasis by the artist changes portraiture into caricature. A misplaced emphasis by the orator changes conviction into doubt. A misplaced emphasis by the bugler changes attack into retreat. A misplaced emphasis by the preacher changes God's evangel into man's evasion and is more fatal than many heresies.

The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost: to bring men to the experimental knowledge of God, which is salvation. We preachers follow in His train. That is our one business. Other worthy things correlate themselves to this, but are subordinate, and are of value only as they contribute to it. If they distract and detract from it, however good they may be for other men, for us they constitute a postponement and imperilment of victory.

Usually preachers begin with this ideal. It is the distinct and overwhelming element in their call. But consciously or unconsciously most men in a few years change their emphasis. As Jonathan Brierly recently said: "The Luthers and Wesleys despised all other subjects in preaching as compared with this central one: that side by side with men's weakness lay immeasurable sources of power which they could draw upon and appropriate by

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an act of faith and will. It is nothing less than tragical to note how, with so magnificent a work on their hands, and with human souls perishing for want of this power, men in pulpits will talk on almost any other subject than this. If the Christianity of to-day is to renew its strength, it must regain that mood and return to that emphasis."

Yet there never was a time when Christian experience was so preachable as now. Scientific theology to-day turns increasingly to the argument from experience in justifying faith. The method introduced by Francis Bacon of letting a thing speak for itself has been confirmed by generations of scientific experimentation and is now intrenching itself in theology, the last of the sciences to recognize its primacy. The day when clever men can evolve a theory out of their own imagination, and by an array of selected proofs foist it on the thinking world, is gone. "We no longer construct *a priori* theories about the sun, moon, and stars. 'The heavens are telling;' and we stop and listen." This laboratory method has been definitely adopted by leaders of religious thought, because it alone has been found sufficient.

Professor Adamson, in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, contrasting Bishop Butler's method with that of to-day, says: "The religious consciousness does not receive the slightest consideration from Butler; whereas it is with its nature and functions that the scientific theology of to-day is almost entirely occupied."

Jonathan Brierly in a recent¹ essay says that "it is curious to note from what opposite quarters the appeal to experience is made. The Salvationist preacher who ha-

¹"Religion and Experience," pages 1 and 2.

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rangues his fellows from the street-corner finds here the ground of his exhortation. And the scientist who endeavors by exact analysis to determine the place of religion as a factor in human evolution seeks his facts in the same quarter. Philosophy from her side also is busy examining the contents of experience in the endeavor to ascertain how far we may trust its verdicts. This region has become, too, in our day, the favorite hunting-ground of the psychologist. The co-operation in the field of religious experience of science and faith, of metaphysics and anthropology, is compelling theologians to revise their whole method of inquiry and to restate their results."

While the greatest American philosopher of the generation now passing, the late Professor Borden P. Bowne, said in *The Hibbert Journal*: "The old rationalizing is finally discredited, and religion has a free field for manifesting itself in life and action. Life and action are deeper than logical processes. Philosophy has done important negative work in clearing the field of a swarm of crude dogmatisms that hinder faith, but we ourselves must do the positive work of incarnating religious faith in the appropriate life. This is now the great need, and for this work the field was never clearer than it is to-day. Technically, of course, our faith does not admit of demonstration; neither does any other faith or unfaith. But it does admit of being lived; and when it is lived our souls see that it is good, and we are satisfied that it is divine."

No man of our generation was better fitted by temperament and education to speak dispassionately on this theme than Professor William James. After a world-wide examination of the phenomena of religious experience he utters his conclusion in these words:² "In a gen-

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eral way then, and on the whole, our abandonment of theological criteria, and our testing of religion by practical common sense and the empirical method, leaves it in possession of its towering place in history. . . . The best fruits of religious experience are the best things that history has to show. . . . To call to mind a succession of such examples as I have lately had to wander through, though it has been only in the reading of them, is to feel encouraged and uplifted and washed in better moral air."

This is a significant acknowledgment for a psychologist who never connected himself with any Church to arrive at.

With these views harmonizes that of another prominent teacher of philosophy, Professor J. M. Pratt, of Williams College, who in a recent volume says: "Personal inner experience, the unreasoned (though by no means unreasonable) religious attitude toward the universe, is the only source from which religion in these days can draw its life. Religious belief will stand or fall with what I have called the 'Religion of Feeling.'"

Professor George C. Cell, of Boston Theological School, in discussing the recent "find" in the Vatican Library of Martin Luther's entire commentary on "Romans," says that the "truest, richest, deepest thing in the work" is the new note of emphasis on religious experience. Dr. Cell goes on to say, referring to Luther's comment on the word "prove" in Romans 12:2:

"When the apostle says that the proof of the divine will, its goodness, its acceptability, its perfection, comes out of the transformation of the new mind, he suggests a very profound thing which can not be handed down from one man to another by means of letters, but can be known

¹ "The Varieties of Religious Experience," pages 259, 377.

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by experience only. And unless it is known by experience, it will never be known at all. That is the deepest word in this commentary. It is doubtless a distinct echo of the personal revelation which came to Luther while brooding over St. Paul. It is that vision, that experience, that basis of proof, that, as Lindsay says, came to Paul while he was riding on the road to Damascus; to Augustine as he was lying under the fig tree in the Milan garden; to Francis as he paced anxiously the flagstones of the Portiuncula Chapel on the plain beneath Assisi; to Wesley while he was in the little room in Aldersgate Street listening to some one reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. This personal revelation which mastered these men was the same—a revelation that unlocked the great secret of Christianity. And the priceless value of this new find in Church history lies in its giving this new chapter in Luther's unfolding as he stands at the threshold of the Reformation, a little before he nailed the ninety-five theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg."

In a personal letter to the author Dr. William L. Watkinson, the foremost Wesleyan minister of Great Britain, says: "In emphasizing the Experimental Note you are exactly in harmony with the pragmatism insisted upon so ably by your William James; and is not this the best side of Ritschl and his school? In past days clever men evolved a theory out of their imagination and then thrust it upon the object in question. To-day they invite the thing to give an account of itself. The astronomer does not assume to explain the heavens by an *a priori* theory; 'the heavens are telling,' and he listens. The geologist consults the testimony of the rocks, etc. Each star, flower, bird, pebble, gives an account of

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itself. The scientist knows that its testimony is true, and this is the secret of the authority and progress of modern science. Let the same order be followed in the Church. Let critics leave theory, their theory, and listen to the witness of those who have proved the grace of Christ in conversion, and who continue to prove it in the stern logical processes of actual life. Reality, life, action has a logic of its own, far more trustworthy than any syllogism of the sophist. Worldly disputers are ready to grant this in regard to the facts of the natural world; let them do the same in regard to the facts of the moral and spiritual sphere. The man in the street in his experience of the things of God is more authoritative than the cleverest of merely speculative writers.

"There is a strange convincing power in simple, sincere witnessing, and pretty nearly all men feel and acknowledge the power of testimony. Am glad you intend to bring this out. Methodism has always been strong in testimony, and now that pragmatism is such a popular philosophy, we ought to be in evidence. It is always interesting when contemporaneous philosophy authenticates Christian doctrine. It may not greatly strengthen *our* faith, but we may avail ourselves of it to commend our doctrine to the hesitating, and to silence our foes. Mark how John Wesley in his 'Journal' passes over unnoticed great political events and movements, whilst he fills pages with the testimonies of poor men, women, and children to the reality and blessedness of the doctrines of grace. You have a fine theme. Modern psychology seeking to explain conversion, etc., as admitted facts, and the whole science of our day insisting on consciousness and experience as the ultimate criteria."

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In view of this primacy accorded religious experience as an apologetic; and in view of its outstanding pre-eminence in the apostolic era, and in those rebirths of Christianity which we know as the Lutheran Reformation and the Wesleyan Revival; and in view of the central place which experience occupies in the thinking world to-day, both psychology and philosophy depending upon it as never before, *now is the Church's superlative opportunity to push an experimental propaganda.* The direction of least resistance is our providential opening. *When the keenest weapons of modern scholarship offer themselves to us, hilt foremost, let us not avert our face, but seize these weapons and wield them to the uttermost.*

To us of the ministry especially is the call clear and imperative. It is for a re-emphasis of religious experience, for a universal renewal of the wooing, evangelizing note. And whether that evangelical renaissance is ours or not depends wholly on our emphasis. It is where we place our stress that determines the character of our ministry.

CHAPTER II

The Speculative Emphasis

"Work for the mass of the people. Setting ten earnest Methodists more in earnest is a better counteractive against Germanism and other mistiness than all your learned diatribes. Besides, if you poke and moil in philosophy while you are young, you will become as impossible a Methodist preacher as So-and-So; but if you go hammer and tongs at the ignoble vulgus just now, while the little blood you have is warm, you will cultivate a passable set of passions, and when they get toward turning-point you may ripen into a gracious specimen of heart and love. . . . Go on, and God bless you! Set all the young preachers on fire. Bite, scratch, and trample under foot all fiddle-faddle finery and essay flying instead of calling men to God. Men like you, of education and mark, must cure others who labor under temptation." (Letter of William Arthur, author of "The Tongue of Fire," to a young minister.)

"At the end of his college course Mr. Arnold found himself greatly disturbed about the foundations of the Christian faith. Many serious questions perplexed him, until at last he applied for help to his warm friend, Mr. Whately, afterward archbishop. He replied: 'These questions that you ask are, indeed, important, and should be answered. But one other question is of greater importance than all these: Are you determined to do right, to be right with God? Go first and settle that question.' This Mr. Arnold did. He began to do the thing that was right wherever he could see it, and to pray to the unseen God to help him in the performance of every duty. Soon there came into his mind a growing conviction of the essential truth of the revelation which so fitted his needs and helped him in the achievement of that character which he found it otherwise impossible to attain. Obedience to conviction brought increasing faith and clearer light and, at last, certain assurance." (Stanley's "Life of Thomas Arnold.")

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IN place of the experimental many preachers have substituted the speculative emphasis. This is the tendency of the philosophical mind. It longs to arrive at final truth and at the unity of truth. It must see the relations of things. It probes for causes. It attempts to build the doctrines and theories with which it labors into systems as the child builds his blocks into houses. The speculative preacher is a son of Greek culture. He seeks to acquaint himself with the best that has been thought and said by men of all ages, and thus with the history of the human spirit. But he is also a true son of Protestantism; for Protestantism not only advised its sons to think, but made them think. He is, therefore, a logical outcome of the Protestant principle of private judgment.

But the speculative *emphasis* for the preacher is a misplaced emphasis. The preacher is to be not primarily a truth-seeker, but a man-seeker. Jesus Christ was the greatest philosopher the world has known, but He was greater as a philanthropist than as a philosopher. He did not say to His disciples, "Follow Me, and I will make you seekers of truth," but "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." The speculative preacher in his search for the truth among the stars fails to see the man at his elbow. It was Lucifer—"the light-bearer"—that fell from heaven. It was not the cherubim, "who know

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most," but the seraphim, "who love most," that the prophet saw evermore before the face of God. Truth is, indeed, to be sought with eagerness and passion, and we must go over Niagara with it if need be. But it is of value not for its own sake, but for men's sake. It is of use to the preacher only as it relates itself to life—to reaching and saving men.

And here is the first weakness of the speculative preacher. All truths are equally important to him. It is as vital a question with him as to whether Shakespeare or Bacon wrote the book wonderful of English poetry as it is whether John the disciple or John the presbyter wrote the fourth Gospel. The discovery of the origin of species is as momentous a thing with him—if we may judge from the attention he gives it—as the method of redemption. As preachers we shall indeed make a serious blunder if we fail to keep hospitable minds to the scientific and literary achievements of our age. We may well rejoice in the biological achievements of Wallace and Darwin, and the geographical achievements of Du Chaillu and Stanley. That was their divine calling. But ours is to save men; and unless our sponsors are to be ashamed of us, we must be as pronounced specialists in our field as Darwin or Stanley was in his. And we can not do it if we spread ourselves over the universe in general instead of over soul-winning in particular. No one will accuse Professor Harnack of belittling the intellectual life, yet he says: "The Christian religion assuredly is informed with a desire to come to terms with all knowledge and with intellectual life as a whole; but when achievements in this field are held to be equally binding with the evangelical message, or even to be a necessary preliminary to it, mischief is done

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to the cause of religion." ("What is Christianity?" p. 227.)

How narrow Jesus and the apostles were! What themes they left untouched in their preaching! Their messages, like the shells of the Japanese gunners, all struck the center. The speculative preacher, on the contrary, seems to go on the supposition, as George Jackson puts it, "that the chief end of man is to speculate on the unknown and argue about it forever."

The speculative emphasis fails in that it misses the point of the gospel message. If I say that Jesus Christ died, I have declared a truth, but it is simply a history. If I say that Jesus Christ died for my sins, I have a gospel. The speculative emphasis fails in that it does not relate the facts of God's redemptive purpose to the needs of the people to whom it speaks. In his Yale lecture on "Preaching," Dr. Nathaniel Burton says: "It has been the sin of my life that I have not always taken aim. I have been a lover of subjects. If I had loved men more, and subjects only as God's instruments of good toward men, it would have been better, and I should have had more to show for all my labor under the sun."

A biographical Christ for the world's interest and entertainment is a very different thing from an evangelical Christ for the world's salvation. We are not always preaching the gospel when we preach about Christ. We are always preaching the gospel when we preach Christ. Take the lectures of Dr. Richard S. Storrs on "The Divine Origin of Christianity as Shown by Its Historical Effects" as an illustration of preaching about Christ, and compare them with the sermons of Charles H. Spurgeon or Alexander Whyte as an illustration of preaching

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Christ. The former is a classic as a Christian apologetic. But it is not the gospel. It might be preached a thousand times and it would not save one sinner from his sins. But the sermons of Spurgeon led multitudes to Christ, both by their spoken utterance and by the printed page; for over a hundred million copies of his sermons have been sold. We do not criticise the gifted Brooklyn preacher for issuing his apologetic. It served a useful end, although it is said that Dr. Storrs expressed keen regret in his later days that he had not given himself more largely to evangelical preaching. But we do affirm that comparatively little of that kind of preaching is needed. Yet in not a few cases the leaders of the Protestant pulpit confine themselves to the preaching of apologetics. Church leaders coming to their Conferences, distinguished pastors of the various denominations, and many of our educational leaders seem to feel that they are not preaching "strong" sermons unless they are preaching apologetics. And then the lesser pastors who aspire to be accounted able preachers take their cue from the leaders, and we have an epidemic of speculative preaching over the land which neither honors God nor blesses man. We need a dozen or so volumes of sermons of the type of Dr. Storrs's elegant classic, but we need millions of the kind that Spurgeon preached.

Phillips Brooks well says in his Yale lectures on "Preaching:" "The preacher must mainly rely upon the strength of what he does believe rather than upon the weakness of what he does not believe. It must be the power of spirituality rather than the weakness of materialism, which makes him strong. . . . If you are to help men who are materialists, it will probably not be by

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a scientific disproof of materialism. It will be by a strong, live proof of spiritual realities. Many ignorant ministers meet the needs of men much wiser than themselves."

Carlyle's protest is worth remembering at the present moment. "Instead of heroic martyr-conduct and inspired and soul-sustaining eloquence whereby religion itself was brought home to our bosoms to live and reign there, we have 'Discourses on the Evidences' endeavoring with the smallest result to make it probable that such a thing as religion exists. The most enthusiastic evangelicals do not preach a gospel, but keep describing how it should and might be preached."

The minister's business is the cure of souls. If he confines himself to the thing God has called him to, and for which his training and experience have fitted him, he will exert a gracious influence which will widen with the years. But when he wanders from his own field, he may find himself humiliated. Turner, the great landscape painter, got the notion that he was a poet as well as an artist. But his verses did not add to his reputation. Ole Bull was severely criticised in the New York papers on one of his early visits to this country, whereupon James Gordon Bennett generously opened the columns of the *Herald* for a reply. But Ole Bull showed his wisdom by saying, "Tank you, Meester Bennett; but I tink it better dat dey write against me and I play against dem."

The speculative emphasis fails in that so frequently it fights "straw men." Its chief function is the defense of the faith, "With the large number of college-bred men in the congregation, and the mentally alert high-school graduates, it is necessary for me to satisfy their doubts!" So Sunday after Sunday the speculative preacher wheels

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out his artillery and demolishes the skeptical enemies of Christianity. We have come in contact with college men both in college and out, rather widely and closely, both East and West; and we declare it as our solemn conviction that the fundamental difficulties of college men are the fundamental difficulties of men in general—wine, women, greed of gold, and pride of power. They have doubts—certainly; but they are doubts with personal roots—sins, and they use the skeptical theories of the day as blinds to mask their real troubles. We speak from personal dealing with not a few college doubters when we say that when they become willing to give up their sins, the doubts quickly vanish. One man in three hundred is an exception. But it is poor generalship to direct all your artillery on him when the two hundred and ninety-nine are there too. The one man can be taken care of privately.

Casaubon, on his first visit to Paris,, was shown over the great hall of the Sorbonne. "This," said his guide, "is where the theologians have disputed for five hundred years." "And pray," asked the great scholar, "what have they settled?" Sure enough, what *did* they settle, save the feverish question of their own primacy in debate?

Defense-of-the-faith sermons should bear the same proportion to evangelistic sermons that a nation's wars bear to its harvests. Richard Baxter confessed to preaching one sermon a year on Christian evidences "just to keep his congregation humble." And that is about right! But it is at first amusing, and then pathetic, to see the speculative preacher come forward Sunday after Sunday with new "bogie" men, against whom he fulminates and of whom not ten people in his congregation have ever heard,

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much less been troubled, tearing a passion to tatters, and demolishing the unseen enemy, while "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed." After a series of sermons designed to prove the existence of God, one lay official met another in the front vestibule and asked him, "Well, what do you think of our pastor's series?" "O!" responded the second, "I still believe in the existence of God." It reminds us of the boast of Squire Bedell, of whom Leslie Stephen tells, "I have attended the university sermon for forty years, and, thank God, I am still a Christian!"

Dr. John Watson said in the *British Weekly*, at the close of his twenty-five years at Sefton Park Church, Liverpool: "I am free to acknowledge that I would have done more good if I had been less critical and more evangelical. . . . Allow me to whisper in some young minister's ear that if he is going to select two or three professional men and prepare learned sermons for them, he is making a double mistake. He is neglecting the common people who heard the Master gladly, and he is wearying the other people nigh unto death. . . . When I have, like all of us, attempted to reconcile science and religion, one of the greatest men of science, who used to be a hearer in my church, never seemed interested; but when I dealt with the deep affairs of the soul, he would come around in the afternoon to talk it out."

On a certain occasion when Martin Luther was about to preach, he said: "I perceive in the church Dr. Justus Jonas and Melanchthon and other learned doctors. By their leave I shall forget that they are here and preach to the multitude."

It is a weakness of the speculative emphasis that it slights, if it does not openly disdain, the experimental

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phase of religion. So habitual and bitter have been its flings at "emotion" and "gush" and the like, that cultivated young men, in or out of the ministry, are afraid to say that they ever feel a throb of religious joy or that they ever shed a tear over their sins. Violence is thereby done to the very constitution of the human soul, and nature retaliates by giving them an artificial religion, as powerless to grip men and win them as a rope of sand or ribbon of cloud, because it has in it neither nature nor grace.

That clergyman "down East" illustrated the attitude of many when he prayed at the close of a service, "And now, Lord, grant, that if any spark of holy fire has been kindled this hour, O Lord, water that spark!"

Herbert Spencer says in his "Autobiography," "In the genesis of a system of thought the emotional nature is a large factor—perhaps as large a factor as the intellectual nature!" And if this is true of the genesis of a system of thought, how much more is it true of the application of that system to life! Mr. Darwin in his later years expressed his regret that he had starved his emotional nature, not only because of the loss of comfort which that entailed, but because it was "probably injurious to the moral nature." Whatever part of a man's life has a grip upon his emotions is going to have the man. In our generation we reserve any confession or manifestation of emotion until we are behind closed doors. Amid the shouts of our children or sorrows of a sick-room we may confess to our family that we have a heart. We repeat that whatever part of a man's life gets his emotions will get the man. If that is the club or the ball-room or the saloon, then it will have him. We preachers may declare

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the contrary doctrine till we die, but nature and grace are alike against us, as we shall discover when the Church learns obedience by the things that she suffers.

Immediately connected with this slighting of religious experience by the speculative emphasis is a certain Pharisaism of intellect. Trusting in themselves that they are intellectual, they despise all who do not accept their standards and procedure. To them the "heart-religion" people are provincials, barbarians, Philistines—the great unwashed! We wish it could be shown that it was the skeptical Matthew Arnolds alone that were responsible for this supercilious attitude toward experimental Christianity. Unfortunately the Pharisaism of culture which is hardest to bear is that found in pulpits. Young men entering the ministry with a longing for scholarship and culture, and at the same time with a passion in their hearts to follow Jesus in His work of saving men, have had nothing so hard to bear as this attitude of sneering criticism by older men of the class we are describing, who stigmatize evangelism as emotional, ephemeral, superficial, and as enlisting minds only of small caliber. These wounds are hardest to bear because they are the wounds received in the house of our friends.

The speculative emphasis may be the proper thing when one has no certain and saving message; if he is in the condition young Emerson was in—Ralph Waldo's younger brother—of whom Max Müller tells in "Auld Lang Syne," who, on his way home from his theological studies in Germany, was overtaken by a fearful storm, which threatened to engulf the vessel, and in his extremity finally promised the Lord that if He would spare his life and allow him to get safely to land he would, on reaching

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home, "abandon all plans for the ministry and go to work to earn an honest living!" That was exactly the thing for him to do. But if you have a sure message—one that you have fallen down upon in the hours of your soul's great crises, and have found will bear you up gloriously—then you will never be satisfied with the speculative emphasis.

CHAPTER III

The Ritualistic Emphasis

"By the way, yesterday morning I was at the Methodist church here. A very pleasant room it is, and I am told that a very worthy society occupy it. But I have a most weighty charge to bring against the good people—a charge of musical apostasy. I had expected a treat of good hearty singing. There were Charles Wesley's hymns, and there were the good old Methodist tunes that ancient piety loved, and modern conceit laughs at! Imagine my chagrin when, after reading the hymn, up rose a choir from a shelf at the other end of the church, and began to sing a monotonous tune of the modern music-book style. The patient congregation stood up meekly to be sung to, as men stand under rain when there is no shelter. Scarcely a lip moved. No one seemed to hear the hymn, or cared for the music. How I longed for the good old Methodist thunder! One good burst of old-fashioned music would have blown this modern singing out of the windows like wadding from a gun! Men may call this an improvement and genteel. Gentility has nearly killed our Churches, and it will kill Methodist churches if they give way to its false and pernicious ambition. We know very well what good old-fashioned Methodist music was. It had faults enough, doubtless, against taste. But it had an inward purpose and religious earnestness which enabled it to carry all its faults and triumph in spite of them. It was worship. Yesterday's music was tolerable singing, but very poor worship." (Address of Henry Ward Beecher to Methodist Preachers' Meeting.)

"There are various points of view from which a man may be able to appreciate religion without living in it. He may appreciate it as discharging the functions of morality, or of police; above all he may appreciate it on æsthetic grounds. When the Romantics re-introduced Catholicism into Germany and France at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Chateaubriand, more especially, was never tired of singing its praises and fancied that he had all the feelings of a Catholic. But an acute critic remarked that Monsieur Chateaubriand was mistaken in his feelings; he thought he was a true Catholic, while as a matter of fact he was only standing before the ancient ruin of the church and exclaiming, 'How beautiful.'" (Harnack, "What is Christianity," p. 213.)

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IN marked contrast with the speculative emphasis is the ritualistic emphasis. With preachers of this school preaching takes a subordinate place. An elaborate symbolism of garb, stately ceremony, music, painting, sculpture, and impressive architecture occupies the chief place. It is the appeal to the soul through the eye and musical ear. The minister is not primarily a preacher, but master of ceremonies of the religion of æstheticism. Exquisite care is bestowed upon the smallest details of public service that nothing intrude which will jar or offend, and that the entire procedure may be dignified, orderly, and impressive. Accompaniments of it are the use of prepared prayers—thus insuring thoughtfulness and appropriateness—and the magnifying of the sacraments, the outward symbols of grace (*e. g.*, in the region of Baltimore, Churches that a hundred years ago contented themselves with an administration of the Lord's Supper once in three months, now felicitate themselves over its daily administration).

He has had limited opportunities indeed for observation who does not see that this type of religion has grown rapidly in the past twenty years. Not only has the particular denomination of Christians most cultivating it had a large growth, but it has made marked inroad upon those Churches which were once supposed to be indissolubly

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wedded to a simpler form of service. Professor Harnack calls this "a burning question." "Protestantism," says he, "is in the midst of a liturgical Catholicizing of its Churches. . . . I do not mean that they are becoming papal; I mean that they are becoming Churches of ordinance, doctrine, and ceremony. . . . To impose an order of divine worship as though it were a legal ordinance, and to regard the punctilious performance of an appointed ritual as a matter of the most sacred necessity, . . . is not Protestantism." Early Protestantism, he declares, "protested against all the traditional arrangements for public worship, all ritualism, and every sort of 'holy work.' As it neither knows nor tolerates any specific form of worship, any material sacrifice and service to God, any mass, any works done for God with a view to salvation, the whole traditional system of public worship, with its pomp, its holy and semi-holy articles, its gestures and processions, came to the ground." ("What is Christianity?" pp. 316, 398. "Thoughts on Protestantism," p. 41.)

This whole ritualistic development of religion arises from three or four things: First, it is the result of the more rapid development of the æsthetic than of the reasoning and religious faculty among a large part of Christendom. Increased wealth and leisure and increased refinement have made people sensitive to anything like violation of taste, while there has not been a corresponding development of the spiritual faculty and knowledge to make them sensitive to violations of the essential spirit of Christianity. A blunder in grammar or an awkward posture of the preacher is occasion for arching of eyebrows and inward ferment in the congregation, while

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emasculating the message of its essential Christian content is so trifling a matter as to pass unnoticed. Jesus said, "It is not eating with unwashen hands that defiles a man, but the things that proceed forth from his heart."

Second, the ritualistic emphasis grows out of confusing æsthetic and religious feeling. The sense of exhilaration or emotion that arises on hearing a beautiful anthem is not devotion to Jesus Christ. Observation and experience alike teach that it is the most ephemeral thing in a fluctuating world. Every student of history knows that the age of the Church's greatest artistic and æsthetic development was the age of her greatest moral degradation—the time of the Medici and the Borgias. This does not mean that æstheticism is immoral—simply that it is unmoral, ethically colorless; and those are deceiving themselves and others who make it a substitute for that love of God which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit.

Herbert Spencer¹ tells us: "A sense of combined grandeur and sweetness, excited by an anthem, with organ and cathedral architecture to suggest the idea of power, was then, and always has been strong in me. . . . But the expression of adoration of a personal being, the utterance of laudations, and the humble professions of obedience never found in me any echoes."

In other words, the emotion excited by a ritualistic expression of religion, which we may accept as a substitute for real religion, Mr. Spencer clearly recognized as æsthetic. The moral and spiritual nature, the real springs of his being, were untouched.

So too it was with Goethe. No one was more

¹"Spencer's Autobiography," page 171, vol. I.

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keenly sensitive to the beautiful and dramatic in Christianity and in religion in general than the great German poet. It is said that "The Hymn to the Sun" produced a profound religious impression upon him that remained as long as he lived. But it was the religion of æsthetic feeling and made him only a sun-worshiper. It never affected him ethically. He was as ready to pluck a woman's heart to pieces, or despoil her of her honor, after as before. A religion of æsthetic feeling is only a ribbon of cloud or a rope of sand when it comes to binding the passions of the human heart.

Third, the ritualistic emphasis arises from the demand of men for an easy religion. It makes but a slight demand on the intellect. It is much easier to gaze than to think; to listen to concords of sweet sounds than to reason, and compare Scripture with Scripture. The service, like certain popular brands of breakfast food, is pre-digested throughout. To adapt a sentence of George Jackson, "Does any one suppose that a sensuous and elaborate ritualism, that can spare only ten or fifteen minutes during the hour of public worship for definite instruction in the things of God, will do for this generation what the preaching of such men as Bushnell and Beecher, Simpson and Finney did for the men of the last generation?" It makes a slight demand on the intellect, we say. Personal initiative in praying, in public speech of laymen (and even of ministers) is not cultivated. Your creed is ready for you. Your prayers are ready for you. All you have to do is to keep your eye on the page and follow the crowd! Thomas Hardy, the English novelist, is not an authority on ecclesiastical history, but, so far as we know, no one has questioned the accuracy of his

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portraiture of contemporary English life. In "The Return of the Native" he makes one of the loyal Wessex adherents of the ritualistic Church to say: "A man can belong to the Church, and bide in his cheerful old inn, and never trouble or worry his mind about doctrines at all. But to be a meetinger (Nonconformist), you must go to the chapel in all winds and weathers, and make yourself as frantic as ■ skit. Not but what chapel members are clever enough chaps in their way. They can lift up beautiful prayers out of their own heads, all about their families and shipwrecks in the newspapers." And a fellow-shire-man replies: "They can, they can; but we churchmen, you see, must have it all printed aforehand, or, dang it all, we should no more know what to say to a great gaffer like the Lord than babes unborn."

The following words are striking and courageous words to come from an Anglican priest: "Simplicity and spirituality of worship involve a strain too great and too lofty for the multitude. . . . Weak minds love to rely on a pompous ritual and a sensuous worship. It is so easy to let these stand for the deeper requirements which lie in the truth that God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." (P. 389, Dr. F. W. Farrar in "Expositor's Bible on 1 Kings.")

Now, when we remember that this demand for an easy religion means not only a slight demand upon the intellect, but a slight demand upon the moral nature, that it is accompanied with the broadest sort of self-indulgence in personal living, the slightest possible denial of the appetites and passions of the flesh, a living so near the world that the line of demarcation is invisible to the ordinary man; and when we remember that it is accompanied also

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with the slightest possible demand upon men for service, for anything that even approaches the self-sacrificing and heroic service of the early Church, it ought to be apparent that this easy religion is not the type to cultivate in an age that needs heroism as much as this age needs it, or in any age that accepts as its symbol the cross of Jesus Christ.

Deeper still than the preceding causes of the ritualistic emphasis is this fact, which we have long pondered, but which we had never seen adverted to until we came across it recently in Professor Harnack's book, "What is Christianity?": "When the second and third generations after the founding of a new religion (or new interpretation of religion, he might have said, also) have passed away; when hundreds, nay, thousands, have become its adherents, no longer through conversion, but by the influence of heredity and birth; when those who laid hold of the faith as great spoil are succeeded by crowds who wrap it around them like an outer garment, a revolution always occurs. The religion of strong feeling and the heart passes into the religion of custom, and therefore of form and of law. . . . Its forms stiffen. . . . New forms are added, . . . and they acquire not only the value of laws and regulations, but they come to be insensibly regarded as themselves containing the very substance of religion; nay, as though they themselves were that substance." (P. 212.) This is the deepest cause of the ritualistic emphasis, and it is the danger that threatens most profoundly our own as well as other Churches to-day. The supreme need of Methodism to-day is a renaissance not of its early forms or methods or nomenclature, indeed, but of its early simple, fervent, and heroic

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spirit, its essential message and life, which will also be a renaissance of apostolic Christianity.

The ritualistic emphasis, at bottom, is a reversion to Judaism. In its attempt to reach the soul through visible symbols rather than by language; in its emphasis on outward forms of worship; in the value it places on ordinances as channels of grace; in the ultra-sacredness with which it invests the places and instruments of worship; in the tendency toward a priestly mediatorship, as alone fully initiated into sacred mysteries—all these characteristics of a ritualistic worship are essential features of Judaism; and back of Judaism, many of them are found in paganism. Of this a later chapter will treat more fully. Suffice it here to say that Christianity was a divinely directed and divinely indwelt evolution out of those elements into more spiritual conceptions and procedures; and to go back to them seems to us as much a reversion as for the Marechal Neil rose to go back to the wild rose of the woods, or the perfected strawberry to revert to the little wild strawberry of the plain, or for civilized man to revert to the hairy biped of the cave-dwelling epoch. It is an easy faith, and will therefore be current as long as human nature remains indolent. But to the man who is not afraid of brain-sweat and soul-sweat, that shall call forth the deepest and highest there is in him, it will not prove satisfying. "When for the time ye ought to be teachers," "how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly rudiments, wherunto ye desire to be in bondage over again? Ye observe days and months and seasons and years;" "and are become such as have need of milk and not of solid food. For solid food is for full-grown men. When we become men let us put away childish things."

CHAPTER IV

The Sociological Emphasis

"For every new form of religious thinking it is a blessed thing that, full of its first fresh enthusiasm, it is compelled to pass along the road where the old solemn judges sit who have judged all the ages, the judges before whose searching gaze many an ardent young opinion has withered away and known its worthlessness, the judges who ask of every comer the same unchanging question, 'Can you make men better men?' No conceit of spirituality or wisdom must make any new opinion think it can escape that test. He who leaves the plain road where the great judges sit, and thinks that he can get around behind them and come into the road again beyond where they are sitting, is sure to fall into some slough of subtlety and to be seen of men no more." (Phillips Brooks, p. 129, Vol. III, Allen's "Life of Brooks.")

"The relation between Christianity and the social crisis is one of the most pressing questions for all intelligent men who realize the power of religion, and most of all for the religious leaders of the people who give direction to the force of religion.

"Under the warm breath of religious faith all social institutions become plastic. The religious spirit removes mountains and tramples on impossibilities. Unless the economic and intellectual factors are strongly re-enforced by religious enthusiasm, the whole social movement may prove abortive, and the New Era may die before it comes to birth." (Professor Walter Rauschenbusch, "Christianity and the Social Crisis," p. 12.)

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THAT man is a Rip Van Winkle indeed who does not know that many pulpits to-day are vibrant with a new emphasis—the sociological.

This is not saying that these ministers are Socialists, and given to identifying Socialism with Christianity; although one hundred and sixty-two ministers, representing twenty-four denominations, recently united in a manifesto in favor of Socialism, and calling on Christian ministers everywhere to adopt its tenets. Yet this is an extreme form for the sociological emphasis. Socialism is one thing, and social reform is another. Millions are social reformers where thousands are Socialists. And there are probably a hundred ministers whose pulpits have a sociological emphasis to one who is an out and out Socialist.

By the sociological emphasis we mean the preaching of right relations between men as the primary aim of religion, and the attempt to regenerate men by regenerating their environment. Its aim is to "transform human society into the Kingdom of God by regenerating all human relations, and reconstructing them in accordance with the will of God."

The sociological emphasis has vastly more to commend it than the two types of preaching we have just been considering. It has its feet on the earth. It deals with human needs and sufferings. It has not the sin of ritualism's

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perfumed parade and pomposity. Nor has it the insidious and insistent intellectual pharisaism of the speculative emphasis. The sociological emphasis at least attempts to heal the open sores of the world, and this is to its very great credit. So far as it is an attempt to realize Christ's brotherhood spirit it is worthy of all praise. Far too many Church people still practice the priest and Levite act on the way to Jericho, and say to the wounded traveler, "Be healed and warmed and filled," without lifting a finger to aid him. The sociological Samaritan comes along and lifts the wounded man up, and takes him to his own inn, and provides for him. But he is not content with that—he is also a propagandist—and he writes a letter to the newspaper, and tells how many wounded travelers there are between Jerusalem and Jericho, and how hypocritically negligent the priest and Levite have been to their needs. All of which does not increase the peace of mind of the priest and Levite, but is a very wholesome discipline notwithstanding. The sociological brother is the gad-fly of the Church. He refuses to let the Church fall asleep in plain view of its unfulfilled obligations. As such we welcome him.

As an effort to put a larger content—a larger brotherhood and ethical content—into the word "consecration," we welcome the sociological preacher. If he succeeds in making the Church member understand that his surrender to God must involve his business life, including his relations to employees and competitors, or to employers and fellow-workmen, a vast deal shall have been done toward setting up the real Kingdom of God on earth.

So far as the sociological emphasis is an attempt to improve the living conditions of the less fortunate mem-

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bers of society—the social misfits, the hurt and maimed in life's hard battle—we welcome it. If it succeeds in making the Church too warm a place for the owner of sunless tenements, and rack-renting landlords generally, however much "Corban" they may bring into the sanctuary, it will be doing God's work. If it move the masses even to a cleaner sty, it will have performed a noble task.

But as an attempt to substitute regeneration by environment for regeneration by the supernatural working of God's Spirit, we reject the sociological emphasis. Men are not saved by sanitation or surroundings. They are not purified by pictures and playgrounds, parks and fresh-air outings, although all these are aids to good living. These are good, but they do not touch the fundamental need. The basic need is spiritual. As W. Robertson Nicoll recently declared: "If every sociological dream could be realized, and every child born to-day could grow up well fed, well clothed, comfortably sheltered, and well educated, the next generation would be very much more comfortable but not one whit more happy. Not that these things are not to be striven after with earnestness, or that praise is not due in generous measure to those who strive, but there remains the something beyond. Let us suppose that the sociological heaven on earth were attained to-morrow, and that no one in the new civilization believed in sin or pain or death—would humanity be really and permanently purified and satisfied? Would not the road still lead on, exactly as it does to-day, to the true satisfactions of the soul? The ultimate problem of human nature is a problem beyond political economy and social uplift." Men are saved into soul-satisfaction and into purity by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ. Chang-

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ing a man's environment may affect his outward conduct somewhat, but it does not affect his inward character. Put a man in the slums who has the Spirit of God in him, and he will change his part of the slums into a garden. Put a man who has the slums in his heart into the fairest environment, and he will gradually change a garden into a slums. The children of the slums become vicious, not because they live in contact with bad physical conditions, but because they are in contact with bad moral conditions.

The writer was a pastor for five and a half years in the poorest districts of two of our American cities. He has gone in and out of the old rookeries and shanties that stood upright only because they were supported on either side by others. He has visited and eaten in many of these places, and shared the lives of the people who lived there. In more recent years he has been the pastor of wealthy Churches, and has gone in and out of the homes of people of prominence in the commercial and political world. He bears record that the moral difficulties in the two widely separated social strata were the same. The same temptations, the same sins. Only with this difference, that sin brought suffering more quickly to the former than to the latter; and they were more open to the gospel cure. The writer's ministry brought a thousand of these poorer people to Christ in the five and a half years indicated, but has been able to win scarcely half as many in the same length of time among those whose lives are surfeited with pleasure and business success.

This is not an argument in favor of leaving wretched tenements as they are: nor is it an excuse to leave unrighted social wrongs. Every life deserves not only a chance at salvation, but at the largest development and

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self-expression. But it is an argument to show that environment, however favorable, does not cure the deeper wounds of the human soul, nor meet its profoundest needs. Those needs are spiritual, and those wounds are sin's wounds. And that requires the impact of the Spirit of God.

And this leads us to the chief weakness of the sociological emphasis, namely, the *partialness* of its diagnosis and cure. It offers a diagnosis of human ills, and a cure that is chiefly industrial, or at most social. Only in a very accommodated sense can it be so affirmed. Sin is a far broader and more pervasive thing. The worst of sins have no relation to industrial life, and only an indirect relation to society. And the Gospel of Christ comes to cure all sorts of sins. To confine the preacher's message to social sins, or even to make these our emphasis, is to narrow and emasculate that message. It is a significant commentary on this that two of the principal American expounders of socialistic doctrines should have deserted their wives to live with "converts" to their theories, thus leaving a trail of suffering and perfidy behind them. And the father of Socialism, Karl Marx, had it brought home to him in a poignant way, when his star pupil deserted Marx's daughter, with whom he had been living as his common-law wife, to marry another woman. There are other sins besides industrial sins. And the gospel of Jesus came to save men from all kinds of sin. Therefore to make the sociological message one's chief message is to make a dangerous—yes, a fatal blunder.

We have seen young men make a splendid start in the ministry, and bid fair to become highly useful, when, caught by the socialistic current, they were swept away

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from the true vocation of the Christian preacher, and to-day are drifting from one fad to another, without making any real contribution to the regeneration of human society.

The ministry of the writer had for two years a sociological emphasis. He conducted, in addition to his regular services, a Sunday afternoon conference on social questions, where experts from various cities were invited to discuss social and industrial problems in relation to morals and religion. It was hoped, first, to secure an improved condition of public sentiment on industrial and living conditions; and, second, to cultivate closer relations between the Church and the working men of the city of Detroit, where the experiment was tried. The following results are recorded: First, politicians attempted, though unsuccessfully, to use the movement to aid themselves and to injure opponents. Second, the working men of the city alienated from the Churches were not conciliated. They were interested only in the purely commercial phases of the social movement. Third, the community undoubtedly had social problems brought to its attention in a striking and forcible way, and some permanent good was probably done. But, fourthly, the effect on the writer's own mind was not favorable. He found himself becoming increasingly a *class* preacher. His themes became more and more industrial themes, or were treated with an industrial bias. His sympathies were becoming intensely class sympathies, with the result that antipathies of almost equal strength grew up against the other class. Indeed, our antipathies are apt to be the reverse side of our sympathies. He found that by these growing antipathies he was cutting himself off from ministering to a large constitu-

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ency, who needed the gospel just as much as the poorest. And then, to his heart, the words of the Master kept coming: "Who made me a judge and a divider over you?" And he remembered that Jesus with all His strong social sympathies, and mighty brotherhood impulse, steadfastly refused to identify Himself with movements for civic reconstruction, refused to lead in a revolt against the tyranny of Rome, or to become an arbiter in industrial matters, but gave Himself steadily to pointing out and curing the sins that eat out the core of the soul.

Realizing these things, and that his pastorate was proving less useful than the two that had preceded (and we may add now, less useful than those that have followed it), the writer of these lines resolved to go back to the emphasis that had been so markedly honored of God in the preceding years, and again took up the experimental note. The result was a new era of blessing, and a turning of five hundred to God in four years; and these came from all walks of life—working men, professional men, and business men.

The argument of this chapter is not to prove that a minister ought not to take the liveliest interest in social problems, and lend his influence to social and industrial improvements. Least of all is it an argument to listen unsympathetically to the sorrows of the poor. But it is an argument to show that the *sociological emphasis* is a mistake for a preacher of the gospel. He may have sociology as a minor in working for his degree, but he must make saving men his major, if he is true to his calling.

The preacher is a man of one work. And that work is *sui generis*. To accomplish it we must leave to one side many things. "Who is blind, but My servant? or

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deaf, as My messenger that I sent?" We must be blind to many alluring paths, we must be deaf to many enticing voices, in order to accomplish our ministry as heralds of Christ. No one would think of Dr. Robert W. Dale, of Birmingham, as looking with regret on any part of his ministry—great preacher, student, and social reformer that he was. Yet toward the end he said that he would have done more for the kingdom and been more "if he had kept himself more closely to the work of a Christian minister." Dr. W. L. Watkinson, in a recent interview, accounts for the decrease in English Wesleyan faith and success by the fact that the ministry has too largely given itself to social themes. While William Booth, at seventy-eight, after a quarter of a century of social experimentation on a colossal scale by the Salvation Army of the world, said, as he was about leaving England on a tour of inspection in America: "Once more, good-bye, dear old England. I leave your shores on what I believe is the Master's business. As I contemplate the future I rely more than ever on the old panacea for lessening the ruins, inequalities, and tyrannies of the world, namely, the regeneration of the individual by the power of God."

We agree with Professor Rauschenbusch that "There are two great entities in human life—the human soul and the human race—and religion is to save both." But we believe that the work is to be accomplished primarily and chiefly by the conversion and moral renewal of individual men, and only secondarily by the influence of laws, customs, and institutions which shall embody the Christ spirit. The latter are efficient, but grace only is sufficient.

CHAPTER V

The Ecclesiastical Emphasis

"The melancholy indictment against the age in which we live is that it has become unspiritual. It has forsaken the upper room in its commendable zeal to clean the streets. In carrying forward its schemes of redemption it has forsaken the closet and cloister; but in the glorious days of the transfiguration, Christ and His disciples went from the mount to the valley, where they cast out the demons; just as the Holy Club went from prayer and Bible study and reading of the classics to teach the costermonger's children and to tell good news to miners and to prisoners. Life becomes arid and dry without this life of the spirit. If you obey any other master, your voice will sound like the auctioneer crying his wares, not like the prophet declaring his truth. Obey any other master, and you will become a huckster and not a herald. We need the passion of a new obedience to the living Christ, a passion like that of Catherine of Genoa, like that of Athanasius and St. Paul." (Bishop William F. McDowell in address on "The Mastery of Christ.")

"The younger men (seemed) to belong to that school of secularized clergy, which I know you dread as much as I do, and to be clutching at anything,—art, music, ecclesiasticism, sociology—anything—to get a power over people which they earnestly wanted, but seemed to see no power in religion to attain. . . . A settled trust in ecclesiastical machinery, and sacraments, and sacred duties, on the one hand, and a splendidly devoted but unthinking and superficial spirit of "work" on the other, are becoming more and more the temper of the English Church." (Phillips Brooks, p. 20, 21, "Allen's Life of Brooks.")

"Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast, . . .
Blind mouths!" (John Milton in "Lycidas.")

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THE work of the pastorate is one of infinite detail. In this generation a multitude of cares have been poured into the lap of the pastor, to which the minister of a generation ago was a stranger. The multiplying of societies within the Church, and the endless benevolences and charities for which he is expected to raise money, together with the various civic and social committees and organizations with which a pastor in the towns and cities is expected to work, impose a heavy tax on the pastor's time and energies. Add to this the perplexing financial problem which seems inevitable to a Church's very existence, and you have a set of forces tending continually to secularize the minister and to desensitize his spiritual faculties. Under the insistent and never-relaxing pressure of it many men who entered the ministry full of enthusiasm and with true spiritual instincts become spiritually anæmic and denaturized.

One of two things then happens: either they abandon the ministry, or they drift into an ecclesiastical emphasis.

Those familiar with Church life know how strong is the tendency for the minister as well as the laity to become immersed in these ecclesiastical side issues, the accidentals and incidentals of religious work, to the neglect of its fundamental, original purpose. They are keenly

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alert to the collection, the dignity and prestige of the Church, the architecture, precedence in rank and authority, the disposal of honors and offices, denominational history and tradition, and yet perhaps are inert to winning men to faith in Christ, and callous to those quickening inspirations and ideals by which alone Christianity lives. They are sensitive only in their duller parts.

Where zeal to build up an organization dominates the desire to express the inner life of Jesus, we have the ecclesiastical emphasis.

Where we are more solicitous to make the community minister to our Church than we are to make our Church minister to the community, we have the ecclesiastical emphasis.

Where we are more anxious to add members to our local organization than we are to introduce souls to a personal, saving acquaintance with Christ, we have the ecclesiastical emphasis.

When we eagerly pursue the families of large means who move into our community, while we neglect the poor whom Providence has placed within reach, we have the ecclesiastical emphasis.

When we attempt to build up our membership and Sunday schools at the expense of other Churches of Christ in the neighborhood, we have an aggravated form of the ecclesiastical emphasis.

In a Western city a wealthy layman offered a munificent sum of money to several Churches of his denomination if they would run their Sunday schools up to a given number. The result was a guerrilla skirmishing for children, who were waylaid on their way to the schools of other Churches, and on whom every persuasion except

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that of force was used to toll them away from the Church of their parents.

The ecclesiastical emphasis is the shadow of Churchly success. From loving their Church for what it achieves for the Kingdom, men come to love it from pride in its growth. They burn incense to their own drag and net. They rejoice in the prosperity of their organization, and are indifferent to the adversity of their neighbor's Church. One of the distinct recollections of our boyhood is of hearing an aged "saint" felicitating his brethren, that if their own Church had not been having success in its work, neither had their rival Church around the corner!

With the ecclesiastical emphasis every local movement is looked at from the standpoint, "How will it affect our Church?" With the ecclesiastical emphasis golden collections mean more than golden-haired children. With the ecclesiastical emphasis the click of a camp stool in the aisle is far sweeter music than the shout of the new-born soul.

The ecclesiastical emphasis estimates by externals—big crowds, big buildings, big collections, tall spires, prominent families, social prestige—no matter though they did get their money in shady ways; no matter though their habits belie the weekly teachings of the Book; no matter though the worldliness, not to say crass materialism, of it all makes the godly mourn and the skeptic laugh. It is prosperity as the ecclesiastical emphasis sees it. And the public press agrees with it, and that portion of officialdom which believes that the Kingdom is to be achieved by carnal weapons is smug and complacent.

"A survey of history shows us," says Professor James, "that, as a rule, religious geniuses attract disciples and pro-

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duce groups of sympathizers. When these groups get strong enough to 'organize' themselves, they become ecclesiastical institutions with corporate ambitions of their own. The spirit of politics and the lust of dogmatic rule are then apt to enter and contaminate the originally innocent things. The plain fact is that men's minds are built, as has been often said, in water-tight compartments. Religious after a fashion, they yet have many other things in them beside their religion, and unholy entanglements and associations inevitably obtain. The basenesses so commonly charged to religion's account are thus, almost all of them, not chargeable at all to religion proper, but rather to religion's practical partner, the spirit of corporate dominion."

This is a good description of the ecclesiastical spirit. And when this narrowness and woodenness of ideal comes to characterize not only individual local Churches but whole denominations, the serviceableness of the denomination to the world is drawing to a close. This is the peculiar danger of denominations with a strongly centralized form of government. The closely-knit organizations are in greater peril than the more loosely confederated bodies. It is the penalty they pay for greater compactness and effectiveness of supervision and operation. Thus the Episcopal and Methodist Episcopal bodies and the Roman Catholics have a very minute system of oversight—a very strong "connectional" system, as it is sometimes called. And these denominations offer peculiar facilities to the ecclesiastical microbe. The large number of offices and the marked gradation in those offices, with their corresponding appeal to selfish ambition, and the fact that promotion depends so largely upon loyalty to immediate su-

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periors—to the maintenance of the existing régime—makes an ecclesiastical emphasis natural and almost inevitable.

It has been said that “Methodism began in a conscience, an organization, and a rapture.” As long as these three are well co-ordinated there is a symmetrical and gracious development. But if Methodism should follow the direction of least resistance, she would gravitate toward the ecclesiastical emphasis. The “organization” would outgrow the “conscience” and the “rapture,” and thus another would be added to history’s array of ecclesiastical wine-skins from which the wine of redeeming power has evaporated.

There is little doubt that it was at this point early Christianity fell from the apostolic pattern. The doctrinal corruption came later, though as a natural consequent. It was the lust for numbers and for prosperity that led the Church of the third and fourth centuries to compromise their Christian doctrines by admitting corruptions from pagan cults, as for instance the adoption of the local worship of Diana of the Ephesians, and adapting it to the worship of the Virgin Mary, in order to capture wholesale the immense local following of “the image that fell down from Jupiter.” Imagine the indignation of the Apostle Paul at the suggestion of such an emasculation of the gospel!

“The old (pagan) Greek sailors and Roman merchants, when voyaging or about to voyage in the changeable weather of the Black Sea, had appealed to Achilles Pontarches, the Lord of the Sea (Pontus), to protect and guide them. The sailors of the Christian period appealed to St. Phocas of Sinope for aid. Similarly the sailors of

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the Levant, who had formerly prayed to the Poseidon (Neptune) of Myra, afterwards invoked St. Nicholas of Myra. There is little essential difference in religious feeling between the older practice and the new: paganism is only slightly disguised in these outwardly Christianized cults." (Professor William M. Ramsey, D. C. L., in "Pauline Studies," pp. 130-1.)

That sort of thing took place throughout Christendom and ultimated in the developments of Christianity which we know as Roman Catholicism and the Greek Orthodox Church. It was the growing ecclesiastical emphasis in the earlier Christian Church which made this possible. And let us not forget, which is the crux of this discussion, that similar tendencies are at work among our Protestant Churches to-day, which, unless checked and expelled by a new infusion of the apostolic spirit, may result as disastrously to pure religion in the world as did the earlier corruption of primitive Christianity.

CHAPTER VI

The Literary Emphasis

"Lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument."
(Ezekiel 33: 32.)

Increase Thy prophets, Lord! Give strength to smite
Shame to the heart of luxury and sloth!
Give them the yearning after human souls
That burned in Wesley's breast! Through them, great God,
Teach poverty it may be rich in Thee;
Teach riches the true wealth of Thine own spirit.
To our loved land, Celestial Spirit,
Bring back the meaning of those ancient words—
Not lost, but soiled, and darkly disesteemed—
The ever-sacred names of husband, wife,
And the great name of Love—whereon is built
The temple of human happiness and hope!
Baptize with holy wrath Thy prophets, Lord!
By them purge from us this corruption foul
That seizes on our civic governments,
Crowns the corrupter in the sight of men,
And makes him maker of laws and honor's source!
Help us in memory of the sainted dead,
Help us, O heaven, to frame a nobler state,
In nobler lives rededicate to Thee:—
Symbol and part of the large brotherhood
Of man and nations; one in one great love,
True love of God, which is the love of man.
In sacrifice and mutual service shown.
Let kindle as before, O Heavenly Light,
New messengers of righteousness and hope
And courage for our day! So shall the world
That ever, surely, climbs to thy desire
Grow swifter toward Thy purpose and intent.

(Richard Watson Gilder.)

THE LITERARY EMPHASIS

PERHAPS the most common of all misplaced emphases among cultivated preachers is the *Literary Emphasis*.

In this the chief place is given to the form of discourse. Style is king. To say clever things in a striking and beautiful way is the *summum bonum*. Preachers of the literary emphasis labor for a finished product in sermonizing. As one of them said to us, "I must strike twelve every time." Each discourse is to be polished after the similitude of a palace. Every production must pass muster as literature.

To accomplish this they feed on the dainties bred in books. They embellish their sermons with quotations. They search far and wide for beautiful figures. They garnish their speech with a rich vocabulary culled from the masters of English. They revel in poetry. Every choice new book is to them great spoil. Acquainting themselves with the best that the world has thought and uttered concerning the true, the beautiful, and the good, they seek to convey it to their congregation in a bright and captivating way.

Such men will always have a hearing—usually a wide hearing. They are delightful apostles of culture. They are pleasing mentors of virtue. They are sweet and charming heralds of the ideal. But their work is not preaching. As creators of choice literature we gladly

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welcome such men to heart and home ; but as preachers we declare they are perversions. They lack the fundamental note.

As Charles E. Jefferson, of Broadway Tabernacle, New York, recently said: "Bright things, true things, helpful things, are said in abundance, but the spiritual passion is lacking. The service smacks of time, and not of eternity. The atmosphere of the sermon is not that of Mt. Sinai or Mt. Calvary, but that of the professor's room or the sanctum of the editor. The intellect is instructed, the emotions are touched, but the conscience is not stirred, nor is the will compelled to appear before the judgment throne and render its decision. The old tone of the 'Thus saith the Lord' of the Hebrew prophets is lacking. Men are everywhere hungering and waiting for it, but in many Churches they have thus far waited for it in vain."

The primary aim of the literary man is to please ; the preacher's is to turn men to righteousness. That it is necessary to gain men's respect and good will in order to save them, we know ; but the literary emphasis makes pleasing them the chief thing. Or, if not pleasing other men, the satisfying of one's own literary taste, which is also the pleasing of man. The preacher is to be a prophet. That is his fundamental business. He is sent as God's messenger with God's saving message. And it is impossible for him to magnify the form of his utterance—to keep his mind on the language and rhetoric—and at the same time converge his faculties and affections and will on persuading the men before him to righteousness. It is a psychological impossibility. Happy indeed is the preacher if his acquaintance with the masters of literature

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is such that his mind is stored with choice quotations—his vocabulary enriched, and his style chastened by its wealth and purity—so that by a subconscious process the strength and beauty of those literary masterpieces find their way into his speech, just as nitrates mingle with the soil and express themselves in an enriched harvest. But it must be an unconscious process. As certainly as the preacher attempts to make them an end in themselves, he loads his sermon down and loads himself down. He can not serve God and mammon. The sermon ceases to be a vital product; at best it is but a crystal. To effect the end of preaching—the turning of men to God, and the building up of men in God—every faculty must be concentrated on securing the assent of intellect and will in the people before him. A hypnotist does not have to exert his will more constantly and persistently upon his subjects than the preacher on his congregation. Wherever the message of the preacher is subordinated to the form of its expression, artificiality ensues. Power is lacking. That is why the alphabetical psalms, for instance, have no such grip of power in them as those psalms of less formal structure, but which are simply the language of deep and powerful feeling.

Said Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his "Life of Waller:" "Of sentiments purely religious it will be found that the most simple expression is the most sublime. . . . The ideas of Christian theology are too simple for eloquence, too sacred for fiction, and too majestic for ornament. To recommend them by tropes and figures is to modify by a concave mirror the sidereal hemisphere."

We need not take this declaration in an absolute sense to hold that the literary emphasis for the preacher

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is a blunder. He fails to accomplish the true end of preaching because his ideal, his purpose, is something different. Sir W. Robertson Nicoll said recently, in a *British Weekly* editorial: "We would not for a moment speak uncharitably, but the question often arises whether preachers have any purpose or any desire or any dream of bringing souls to Christ by the sermons they preach. We have known men to sneer at the idea that the Church was a soul-saving organization. It is possible to belittle the great idea of salvation, but those who understand it in the New Testament sense will perceive that if the Church is not a soul-saving organization, it can never be the Church of Jesus Christ. Souls can not be won without travail, without prayer, without expostulation, and pleading that comes from the heart, without the power of the Holy Spirit. Only those who must have them will have them."

It is a strange perversion of the noblest of all arts that the preacher should come to think more of the sermon—which is only the by-product of preaching—than he does of saving souls, which is the real product, or should be. That was why John Wesley said he could no more preach a fine sermon than he could wear a fine coat. Men smile at that now. But it was that which created Methodism and which revolutionized the eighteenth century. Putting the sermon as a product above its soul-winning object is, we say, a perversion. It is as though a surgeon should think more of winning the applause of his fellow surgeons, or of vindicating his theory of surgery, or of displaying his mastery of the technique of the surgeon's art, than he thinks of the life of the helpless, unconscious sufferer who lies on the operating table before him, or

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than he thinks of the agony of the husband who with streaming eyes paces the corridor outside the operating room. How we whose loved ones have been under the knife would hate such a surgeon! And yet, have not fathers and mothers who are groaning over the sins and waywardness of their sons and daughters just as much reason to despise us if they see that we are more interested in rounding out our figures of speech and polishing our periods, or in winning the applause of the crowd, than we are in saving those perishing sons and daughters? It is as though an advocate at the bar, when the life of his client is at stake, should be more solicitous about enhancing his legal reputation as an erudite student of precedents and judicial procedure, and more anxious to produce a stunning effect on the gaping crowd, than he is to secure an acquittal. How his client would hate him for his pride and heartlessness! No other analogy suits us so well, brothers of the ministry. We are the retained advocates of the Lord Jesus. Our one business is to plead His case. Every time we face a jury of human souls we are to secure Him a verdict. It may be necessary for us to violate some of the laws of homiletical construction; it may be necessary to leave unsatisfied our own literary taste—we may have to crucify that for Christ's sake; but He wants us to get Him a verdict. We may have to iterate and reiterate some things for the sake of the weaker intellects in the jury box; we may have to illustrate and simplify; but we must do it for the sake of a verdict. "I must become all things to all men if by any means I may save some." He expects through us a favorable verdict. What do you suppose Wallace could have said to Mrs. Hubbard when he came back to New York

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without her husband—how could he have faced her and told her he had left her husband dead among the Labrador wilds—if he had not done his best to save him? So we are to face Christ. And how dare we preachers face Him, leaving so many perished back in the Labrador wilds of evil, unless we have done our uttermost to bring every one of them with us? O! is not God wearied unto death with the preaching that aims at nothing and gets nowhere—sheet lightning, circum-perambulatory sermonizing, that meanders around Zion without even marking the towers thereof?

We have seen the ministry of some splendid men hopelessly crippled by their literary ambitions. We shall never forget the impression made on our mind in our first pastorate by seeing the pastor of the leading Church of the city in the bookstore reading "Modern French Dramatists" when a faithful few of his congregation were down at the church trying to hold a revival meeting with the aid of an evangelist. Brilliant, gifted, a remarkable sermonizer (as regards the literary quality of his sermons), yet his pastorate there, as everywhere since, was a failure, and his appointments have been on a steady toboggan slide. Near him a pastor of the same age, with only half the gifts, succeeded magnificently, and continued in strength up to the very hour God called him from labor to reward. But he was a Spirit-anointed man with the evangelistic emphasis.

CHAPTER VII

The Evangelistic Emphasis

"We are the music makers,
We are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea breakers
And sitting by desolate streams,
World losers and world forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams.

Yet we are the movers and shapers
Of the world forever it seems.
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown,
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a Kingdom down."

(Arthur O'Shaughnessy.)

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NO DOUBT, while you have followed this critique of preceding emphases, some of our readers have been thinking how easy it would be to press our argument into the service of mental indolence. Without doubt the greatest foe of evangelism has been intellectual laziness on the part of so many who have espoused it. In this important respect it has sorely needed to be saved from its friends. And for this reason many of our brightest young men have been afraid of it. But empty exhortation and sonorous appeal are not of its essence. They are the barnacles of the vessel. "We must not burn a ship to get rid of its cockroaches." Our contention is that the experimental and evangelistic emphasis responds magnificently to brain-sweat; that the same intense study put into it as is put into the speculative or literary emphasis will produce a hundred-fold greater results, without any mental deterioration or loss. The deeps of human character and motive, the controlling factors in choice, the natural history of affections, new reasons for living the old life, analogies in nature and history to the crises of the soul—O! an infinite number of themes collateral to and bound up with the soul-winning message, are the proper and the inevitable field of the experimental preacher.

How Henry Drummond laid hold of these collateral fields and pressed their rich products into his evangelistic

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message, with the result that the most elusive classes of our modern civilization—elusive as regards their approachability by religious propagandism—the young men of the colleges, and the boys of the streets, and the society people of West London, were powerfully moved by him! How Hugh Price Hughes combined the two elements of culture and evangelism! Leaving Oxford with the determination, as he tells us, to become a scholarly and literary preacher, the exigent needs of the multitudes, the moribund moralities of the masses, high and low, and then the displayed power of God in saving men, after a ventured evangelistic sermon of his one night at Dover, changed the whole current of his ministry and made him one of the mightiest soul-winners of any generation and, under God, a re-creator of both British and American Methodism. J. H. Jowett, recently of Birmingham; Alexander Whyte, of Edinburgh; G. Campbell Morgan, George Jackson, and a host of others of to-day, as were Chalmers, Finney, Wesley, and Massillon of yesterday, are illustrations of the possibility and potency of uniting culture and evangelism.

Bishop Simpson, in a conversation with Bishop Walden, attributed whatever power his preaching possessed to his preparing and speaking, in the formative years of his ministry, with the purpose of securing the immediate conversion of the impenitent. To Dr. T. L. Cuyler Charles H. Spurgeon expressed his surprise and regret that the American pulpit did not more generally aim at securing the immediate conversion of men. He declared that he aimed at and secured that result all the year round. Henry Ward Beecher, at the height of his power, said: "From the very beginning, night and day, without vary-

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ing, through all the early months of my ministry here, I had but one feeling—to preach Christ for the awakening of men for their conversion. My desire was that this should be a revival Church—a Church in which the gospel should be preached primarily and mainly for the recreation of man's moral nature, for the bringing of Christ as a living power upon the living souls of men. . . . The keynote of my ministry among you has been the evangelization of the soul or the awakening of men from their sinfulness, and their conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ; and if you had taken that away from my thoughts and feelings, you would have taken away the very central principle of my ministry. By far the largest number of my sermons have been aimed at the conviction and conversion of men." If the pulpit giants of the past were not afraid of cheapening their preaching by the evangelistic emphasis, need we be afraid?

When we sat in the Inter-Church Congress in New York recently and heard the reports from J. Wilbur Chapman and Newell Dwight Hillis of their evangelistic campaigns, how not only in churches, but in theaters and factories, and from carts and wagons, they, out of their rich and varied stores of scholarship and cultivated personalities, had poured the warm heart-message of an immediate salvation upon the multitudes, we felt like saying with Simeon of old, "Now, Lord, lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." And we said in our heart: "God bless the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians! If they are more alert in leading the evangelistic hosts than we Methodists, grant them glorious success!" And then we thought of the gentleman who had planted in a jar a

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sprig of sweet-brier, as he thought, and placed it in his room. One day a friend, an expert horticulturist, called on him and declared that the sprig was not sweet-brier at all, but only common shrub. So our friend took it up by the roots and threw it out of his front window to the street. Some months after the gentleman was asked to call on a sick neighbor. On entering the house he was delighted with the fragrance of a sweet-brier that greeted him. Expressing his pleasure to the sick man, the latter said: "I am glad you like it, neighbor. By the way, I discovered that sweet-brier out in the street in front of your house." Methodist brethren, if the Congregational and Presbyterian neighbors have found our sweet-brier, and it is filling their house with fragrance, let us rejoice with them. But, O let us also plant it again in our own house, that its fragrance may fill all our nights and gladden all our days!

We believe in the evangelistic emphasis because only so can we secure an ethical revival. From the days when the preaching of the cross by the apostles cleaned out the foul nests of Jerusalem and Ephesus and Corinth, on down to the late Welsh revival, the evangelistic emphasis has brought a new moral life. Holiness follows the Holy Ghost.

We believe in the evangelistic emphasis because only so is the Church preserved from becoming cold and moribund. A Church that ceases to be evangelistic soon ceases to be evangelical. A Church that ceases to win souls soon loses sympathy for souls. It gets permeated with class feeling and with "the fastidiousness of a false culture."

We believe in the evangelistic emphasis because with-

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out it the preacher himself tends to become academic and professional. He loses the sweetness and power of the gospel out of his own heart. He gravitates toward pessimism, if not toward cynicism and unbelief.

We believe in the evangelistic emphasis because it is the only way that the world can be won for Christ. "The King's business requires haste." "Go ye out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in." The bitter needs of the multitudes at our very doors cry like alarm-bells and plead for it like the sobbings of motherless children.

We believe in the evangelistic emphasis because we have seen it succeed where everything else had failed. In struggling Churches among workingmen supposed to be unfriendly to Christianity, in down-town Churches supposed to be past redemption, in aristocratic, wealthy congregations dying of respectability and self-restraint, we have seen the same evangelistic emphasis on the present immediate power of Jesus Christ to save, work out the same glorious results. *Hence we believe in it.* The cross of Christ, thus constantly and confidently presented, is the power of God unto salvation under silks and calicoes, under imported laces and faded ribbons.

How can we secure the evangelistic emphasis? We shall have it when we want it more than we want anything else. A distinguished American preacher, the late Arthur T. Pierson, became profoundly distressed over the lack of results in his ministry in Detroit. God said to him, "If you will give up the idol of literary applause, I will give you souls." He replied, "I will do it." Within sixteen months God gave him more souls than he had had in sixteen years in the ministry before.

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We know an old gentleman who was an inmate of the home of Charles G. Finney when the latter was president at Oberlin. He says that more than once he saw Dr. Finney push back his chair from an unfinished meal, the veins swelling in his neck, and the tears beginning to flow down his face, and, excusing himself from the table, he would hurry to his room and pour out his soul to God on behalf of his students. That was the source of the "hypnotism" which a recent writer speaks of Finney's exercising over people. When we want souls as Finney wanted them and as Wesley wanted them; when we are content to be, like Uncle John Vassar, "God's greyhounds after souls;" when we shall stand like our Lord, with outstretched arms, weeping and crying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings!" we shall get souls.

The battle for souls is lost or won in the preacher's own heart. If he is not being saved by the gospel he preaches—if he is being baffled and defeated in his own experience—he goes into the campaign for souls whipped. In his utterance there is no note of certainty and compelling power. But if he knows Christ as a personal, present, and prevailing Savior, he will have the swing of conquest in his movement. Purity means power. Holiness of heart means a host by our art. The passion of love for men will be as natural as eating and breathing. And it shall be his at length to stand radiant before the Throne and, with a host of trophies, to say, "Behold, here am I, and the children whom Thou hast given me."

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"Time worketh ! Let me work, too.
Time undoeth ! O, let me do !
As busy as Time at my work I'd be,
Till I rest in the rest of eternity.

Sin worketh ! Let me work, too.
Sin undoeth ! O, let me do !
As busy as Sin at my work I'd be,
Till I rest in the rest of eternity.

Death worketh ! Let me work, too.
Death undoeth ! O, let me do !
As busy as Death at my work I'd be,
Till I rest in the rest of eternity."

CHAPTER VIII

Is There a Silencing of the Experi-
mental Note?

"Expression deepens impression." (J. Campbell White.)

"The authentic insight and experience of any human soul . . . is real knowledge, a real possession and acquirement, how small soever; palabra, where it a supreme pontiff's, is wind merely, and nothing, or less than nothing." (Thomas Carlyle.)

"When I see how the real difficulty of multitudes of bewildered men is not this or that unsolved problem, but the whole incapacity of comprehending God; when I see this, I understand how the best boon God can give to any group of men must often be to take one of them and, bearing witness of Himself to him, set him to bearing that witness of the Lord to his brethren, which only a man surrounded and filled with God can bear." (Phillips Brooks, "Life," Vol. III, p. 64.)

"Bright Thy presence when it breaketh,
Lord, on some rapt soul apart;
Sweet Thy Spirit when it speaketh
Peace unto some lonely heart;
 Blest the raptures
From unaided lips that start.
But more bright Thy presence dwelleth
In a waiting, burning throng;
Yet more sweet the rapture swelleth
Of a many-voiced song;
 More divinely
Glows each soul glad souls among." (*Anon.*)

IS THERE A SILENCING OF THE EXPERIMENTAL NOTE?

THREE conditions seem to say "Yes." The character of Church societies, current pulpit themes, and the programs of official Church assemblies.

First, as to Church societies. These presumably express the inner life of a congregation. Note in any Church bulletin the societies advertised. They comprise Men's Clubs and Brotherhoods, Ladies' Aid Societies, Boys' and Girls' Clubs, Epworth Leagues, Christian Endeavor Societies, Choral Unions, Women's Missionary Societies, Circles of King's Daughters, Sewing Circles, Chautauqua Circles, Debating Clubs, Boys' Brigades, Boy Scouts, Social Unions, etc.

What element predominates in the organizations? There is something of the missionary, more or less of the philanthropic, and a flavor of the devotional; but the outstanding element is social and financial. On the whole, these organizations express the kindly impulse of the Church to be helpful. They certainly are far in advance in unselfishness, of organizations prevailing outside the Church. The root idea of most of these societies is service in some form. In practice, however, the service features are overshadowed by the social and financial. And very, very often the anxiety to make the occasion financially profitable detracts from the social spirit, thus

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crippling the Church's ministry of sociability. And the service attempted generally falls far short of the higher service which is the Church's primary calling.

Phillips Brooks,¹ in a letter to Bishop Henry C. Potter, of New York, satirized some of the present-day Church activities as follows:

"No, my dear Henry, I will not go back on what I wrote or what the *Evening Post* says that I wrote, which is the same thing. I conceive the trimming of the altar, the cleaning of the candlesticks, the cutting out of artificial flowers, and the darning of the sacramental linen to be, on the whole, the noblest occupation of the female mind, the very crown and glory of the parish work of women. They correspond exactly to the sublime work of showing strangers to seats and playing checkers with loafers at the reading-room, which is what we have canonized as *men's* work in the same parish. How beautiful they both are! How worthy of the male and female topstones of Creation!"

Valuable as the philanthropies of these various societies are, yet it may well be doubted whether an impulse to service that is not rooted in a vital religious experience will long endure. Indeed, the history of all kinds of Christian enterprises shows that they were born out of devotion to God, and are maintained only as that devotion is maintained. Hence it seems to the writer a superficial method to multiply organizations for this or that form of service while neglecting to cultivate the motive power which alone can render those organizations effective. Nature gains most of her ends indirectly. And the ideals of service to our fellows will be much more swiftly

¹ "Life," Vol. III, page 253.

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and fully realized if more of our organizations faced inward toward character-building rather than outward toward service.

George Müller is an illustration. None will question his humanitarian impulse, whose five large orphanages have cared for and nurtured into worthy lives twenty thousand orphaned boys and girls at Bristol, England, and provided a good education for one hundred and twenty-one thousand other children, involving an expenditure of \$7,500,000. Few philanthropic achievements of modern times equal this. Yet this man of a thousand daily cares wrote in the midst of them: "Above all things see that your souls are happy in the Lord. Other things may press upon you. The Lord's work even may have urgent claims upon your attention, but I deliberately repeat, it is of supreme, paramount importance that you should seek above all other things to have your own soul truly happy in God Himself. Day by day seek to make this the most important business in your life."

We are well aware how scant is the sympathy of our generation for this view of life. Not only the man of the world but the majority of Church people look on it with scarcely repressed scorn. Nevertheless the achievements of the man who uttered the sentiment, compared with the modest achievements of us who criticise it, compel for his words a hearing. Müller went on the theory that a conscious fellowship with God was a working asset: that he could do more work in a short day than he could in a long day, if that day had been shortened by getting into direct touch with God. Martin Luther held the same foolish notion, as did John Wesley and General Charles George Gordon, and other men whose achieve-

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ments have an erratic way of bestriding other men's achievements like Colossi.

It was the eminent Dr. J. H. Jowett, then of Carr's Lane, Birmingham, England, now of New York, who reminded our English Wesleyan brethren that the revival of personal religion under the Wesleys and Whitefield had given rise to the four great philanthropic movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; viz., the anti-slavery movement, led by Wilberforce; the prison reform movement, led by John Howard; the Sunday school movement, initiated by Robert Raikes; and the foreign missionary movement, begun by William Carey. Though led by men of various faiths, these four great epochal movements are traced in their origin back to the great Wesleyan revival of experimental religion; and that not by a Methodist, but by the "Bishop of English Non-conformists," Dr. Jowett, successor to R. W. Dale.

Can any Christian forget that the most phenomenal and sacrificial giving the world has ever seen was that immediately following Pentecost? "And those having lands sold them, and laid the price at the apostles' feet. Neither said any one of them that aught which he possessed was his own." In the most mercenary race the world has produced, there arose on the day of Pentecost, high above the whirring wheels of commerce, and above the discordant cries of the market, whose traders had invaded even the sacred precincts of the Temple, clear as a silver bell, and hushing all other noises, the Experimental Note; and the immediate effect was the unsealing in a thousand hearts of the long-congealed fountains of human benevolence, accompanied by an unspeakable joy.

A study of the great philanthropies of the world will

SILENCING OF THE EXPERIMENTAL NOTE

show that they have not only had their *origin* in a great spiritual impulse, but that they have depended on the spiritual impulse for their *continuance*. Not but that many unspiritual people contribute to them, but the persons who carry the load, who endure sacrifices and Gethsemanes for the cause, are almost without exception men and women whose source of inspiration is a vital religious experience.

"How fares the battle to-day?" asked a gentleman of a worker among the slums of East London, as he came trudging up a dusty lane. "Bravely," replied the worker, "for I have been much cheered with thought of Christ." The men and women who take up various philanthropies as a popular fad, as thousands do, soon drop out. They have no adequate motive power. In our own experience as Superintendent of Missions in Detroit, and in other philanthropic labors since, we have seen this illustrated again and again. Those who endure to the end are those whose sympathies are being constantly rekindled at the Christ-flame. Illustrations by the score troop to mind. Tracy McGregor, of Detroit; the Hadleys and McAuley, and Callahan, of New York; Harry Monroe, of Chicago; Rev. "Tom" Uzzell, of Denver, and a host of others whose philanthropic work has been such as to receive recognition by municipal and even State authorities, have all confessed that their daily fellowship with Christ was the source of their motive power.

The silencing of the experimental note appears, further, in the dying out of meetings distinctively for the cultivation of personal religious experience.

It is an exceptional night at prayer-meeting when one-tenth of the membership of a Church is present. After

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making allowance for illness, child members, and unavoidable detentions, it still remains true that in practically all Churches not one-fifth of the members of adult years ever attend the midweek service, whose especial function it is to build up Christian people in the knowledge of God. In many Churches this service has been abandoned. The district superintendent of the Creston District in the Des Moines Conference, a region that will average well in intelligence and piety with other regions, reports that forty-three Churches of his district out of a total of eighty-eight have no prayer-meetings or corresponding services, and seventy have no class-meetings. Indeed, "fellowship" meetings have quite generally disappeared—class-meetings, "band"-meetings, etc. All this seems to indicate not necessarily the decline of religion, but the disappearance of the experimental note.

Why?

Is it because religious testimony has degenerated into cant? Into the repetition of phrases empty of contents? Has it been because of indolent and otherwise inefficient leadership? Or is it impossible to gather out of ordinary lives, week by week, sufficient pollen to vitalize other lives?

Has the witnessing spirit been slain by the condemning consciousness of inconsistent living? Or chilled to death by the fastidiousness of a false culture? Or lulled to slumber by the quietude of the pulpit on this theme? Or has the result been produced by a combination of all the foregoing causes?

That there has been much cant and still more unconscious insincerity is doubtless true. We can not for-

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get how George Eliot was first turned against the Church by the lie of a class-meeting Methodist, who said that "she did not feel that she had grieved the Spirit much" by her lie. Little did that unfaithful woman dream how far her lie would reach—that its baneful waves should break on Time's farthest shore.

There have been overworked shibboleths and under-worked mentality and sympathy. Leadership often has been notoriously inert. As always, "when the intellect has no part, or very little part, in the religious life, the religious life will never have in it the elements of enduring vigor."

But must we burn a ship to rid it of barnacles, or abandon a house because it has cockroaches? St. Paul did not stop the experience meetings at Corinth: he cut off their excrescences.

Is not the freshest, most original, and altogether most vitalizing contribution of the individual to the Church-life the story of God's dealings with his soul? And if he be able also to interpret it correctly, his story is second in value only to a divine revelation. One-tenth of Acts is taken up with the several narrations of Paul's conversion. The only events occupying larger space in the New Testament are the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord.

Phillips Brooks has this to say on the value of experience: "I believe fully that the intrinsic life of any human being is so interesting that if it can be simply and sympathetically put in words, it will be legitimately interesting to other men . . . There is not one of us, therefore, who, if he be true, and pure, and natural, may

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not be stimulating and interesting to his fellow-men in some small circle as they touch his life." (Vol. III, "Life," p. 185.)

Professor Adolf Harnack, who will not be suspected of religious enthusiasm, says of the early Church: "Its characteristic features were: (1) the recognition of Jesus as the living Lord; (2) the fact that in every individual member religion was an actual experience; (3) the living of a holy life in purity and brotherly fellowship."

Hall Caine in a letter to Hugh Price Hughes said: "Last night I dined with a group of Catholic ecclesiastics of various degrees, and the talk turned on Wesley. I gave a little account of a prayer-meeting of five old men in an abandoned chapel just under my house here at Greeba: the sincerity, the devotion, the fervor, the language of Scripture, the complete absence of the forms and ceremonies that usually accompany an approach to the Almighty. I wish you could have heard what the priests said of it all—how they spoke of Wesley and of the great man's great secret of employing the laity, and then of that scene of the five old men."

"That great man's great secret of employing the laity" was the "great secret" of getting his laity into a personal experience of salvation, whereby they were set free for service; yes, by which the word of the Lord became as a fire shut up in their bones, so that they could not but speak. And Roman Catholics though Hall Caine's friends were, and man of the world though he was, they all alike recognized true Christianity when they found it exemplified in those five praying old men. And they laid their finger on the secret of Methodism's early power in its use of Spirit-endowed laymen as its witnesses.

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Thirty-five years after Methodism was born in old Aldersgate Street, after John Wesley had had abundant opportunity to test the significance of that strange warming of the heart which came to him then, and the validity of the Experimental Note which that night he began to sound, we find him making this entry in his Journal:

"I preached at eight on that delicate device of Satan to destroy the whole religion of the heart—the telling men not to regard frames or feelings, but to live by naked faith; that is, in plain terms, not to regard either love, joy, peace, or any other fruit of the Spirit: not to regard whether they feel these or the reverse; whether their souls be in a heavenly or hellish frame."

That master-thinker of American Congregationalism, Horace Bushnell, pointed out the mistake many make in depreciating religious experience in these words: "How many in the Church cripple themselves and all but extinguish their life by allowing nothing good or right in themselves to be naturally acted out. They stifle every beginning of grace by over-persistent handling, scrutinizing, and testing of it. Do not hide the righteousness of God in your heart, lest you make a tomb of your heart and bury it there. Go forward and act out naturally, testify freely, and live openly the grace that is in you."

Perhaps nowhere has the value of the Experimental Note been more strikingly set forth, both in its subjective and outer effects, than by Dr. J. H. Jowett.¹ Speaking of the reflex influence of open confession of Christ on the witness himself, he says:

"We are strengthened by confession. Secrecy robs us of the stimulus of publicity, and of the supports that

¹ "Thirsting for the Springs," page 13.

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belong to a public confession. . . . The inner sanctities are strengthened and enriched by open confession. A man's faith in God is fortified by the experience of confession. It is always a safe rule in life to regard one's shrinkings with suspicion. Our shrinkings are very frequently the index to urgent duties. A man's shrinkings may be, and often are, the recoils of timidity and cowardice. I must, therefore, look closely at my shrinkings, lest perchance they hide my duties. Men shrink from the public confession of Christ. They will do anything, will prefer anything, rather than make a public confession of their belief in the rights and kingship of Christ. And yet such a confession would often act with great spiritual energy. It is a kind of public pledge, a public consecration of life; and consecration always means amplification. . . . The great exercise will stir up and strengthen the forces of salvation within thee, and thou shalt assuredly be led to the perfected life."

The effect of confession on the hearers Dr. Jowett set forth in a most beautiful way in an address before the Congregational Council of Great Britain when he laid down his office as president:

"The Church is poor because so much of her treasure is imprisoned. Our riches are buried in the isolated lives of individual members instead of being pooled for the enrichment of the fraternity. . . . The psalm that is born in the heart remains unsung, and the sadness it was fitted to remove in the heart of another abides like a clammy mist. The revelation that dawned upon one wondering soul is never shared, and so another remains in the cold imprisonment of darkness. The private interpretation is never given, and for want of the key many ob-

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structing doors are never unlocked. This is the neglected side of the apostolic *koionia* (fellowship), and for the want of it the Church goes out to meet the world in the poverty of a starved individualism rather than in the rich and full-blooded strength of her communistic vigor. In lieu of this broader and richer fellowship we have exalted the ministry of one man, and out of the limited pool of his experience—and sometimes they are not even experiences, but only fond and desirable assumptions—the whole community has to drink, while the rest of the pools remain untapped. And O! the treasures that are hidden in those unshared and unrevealed experiences!

“What have our matured saints to tell us? How did they escape the snare, or by what subtlety were they fatally beguiled? How did they take the hill, and where did they discover the springs of refreshing? What did they find to be the best foot-gear when the gradient was steep, and how did they comfort their hearts when they dug the grave by the way? And what is it like to grow old, and what delicacies does the Lord of the road provide for aged pilgrims? And have they seen any particular and wonderful stars in their evening sky? Are not you and I and all of us unspeakably poorer that these counsels and inspirations remain untold?

“And our younger communicants—how are they faring on the new and arduous road? What unsuspected difficulties are they meeting, and what unsuspected provisions have they received? And what privileges of service have been given them? And what inspiring vision have they found in the task? And our stalwart warriors, what have they to tell us? How goes the fight in the business field, on the market and exchange? What hid-

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den secret has the Lord of light been unveiling to the ordained laymen? What wealth of truth and glory? *These*, I say, are the breadths of the koionia we do not traverse; these are the mines we do not work; and the output of our moral and spiritual energy is consequently small."

We believe the time is ripe, morally and psychologically, for a renaissance of experimental Christianity. The satiety and inner barrenness of the age's orgies of sense and the disappointments of commercial success have paved the way for the most tremendous spiritual appeal since the days of decadent Rome. The very wistfulness with which some of the great scientists have been investigating psychic phenomena, and even allowing themselves to be duped by the alleged achievements of spiritualism and Christian Science, shows how strong is the reaction from materialism and how eager many are becoming to reassert the reign of the spiritual.

CHAPTER IX

Current Pulpit Themes: A
Comparison

[Autograph letter of Dr. Alexander Whyte, of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, the most eminent pastor in Scotland.]

7, CHARLOTTE SQUARE,

EDINBURGH.

16. 9. 94

My dear Sir:

I can only copy
your own wire word:

"The need of the re-organizing
of the ministry & the Church
of the Experimental State, &
of an Evangelical Renaissance."

I am 73 - I wish I were
33, that I might give
my whole life to this
type of preaching!

Accept a little book
a time that you may
not have seen:

Believe me
Alexander Whyte

[Autograph letter of Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, editor of *The British Weekly* and the leader of Evangelical Christianity in England.]

THE BRITISH WEEKLY,
ST PAUL'S HOUSE,
WARWICK SQUARE,
LONDON, E.C.

July 20 10

Dear D-Sheridan

I have the deepest
sympathy with your object & it is a
sympathy that grows with the years.
It seems to be the most difficult of all
things to maintain steadily an
experimental & evangelistic ministry.
Preachers slide away from that
into all manner of useless addresses.
I suppose that one needs to be keyed
up by a constant & vivid sense of
what Christ means to his own soul
before he can transmit the truth to
others. I have written much on the
subject & I hope to write much more.

Yours sincerely
W Robertson Nicoll

CURRENT PULPIT THEMES: A COMPARISON

FROM our shelves we take down, almost at random, three recent volumes of sermons. The reading shows them to be scholarly, thoughtful, and graceful. The following themes are treated: "The Authority of the Preacher," "On Reception of New Truth," "Marching to Music," "God Our Shield and Reward," "The Helping Stars," "The Macedonian Cry," "The Immortality of the Soul," "Love to Christ as a Person," "The Climax of Life," "The Christ's Pity," "Immortality and Science," "Love the Interpreter of God," "The Answer to Life's Problems," "At the Beautiful Gate," "Land Tenure," "Pure and Undeiled Religion," "Immortality and Nature," "The Method of Penalty," "Methodism's Responsibility to the Kingdom of God," "Life a Gain," and "Things to be Awaited."

We take down also a volume of John Wesley's sermons and note their titles: "Salvation by Faith," "The Almost Christian," "Awake, Thou That Sleepest," "They Were All Filled With the Holy Ghost," "Justification by Faith," "The Righteousness of Faith," "The Way to the Kingdom," "First Fruits of the Spirit," "The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption," "The Witness of the Spirit," "The Witness of Our Own Spirit," "Sin in Believers," "The Repentance of Believers," "The Marks of

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the New Birth," "Circumcision of the Heart," "The Great Assize," and forty-nine other sermons in like strain.

Comparing the two sets of sermons, the first thing that strikes us is the greater current interest of the twentieth-century group. The second thing is the superior rhetorical finish of the twentieth-century group. They make delightful reading, and one readily imagines how pleasant it would be to sit under the ministry of such preachers. The third contrast is the absence in the twentieth-century group of Wesley's intense experimental note. There is no probing for the conscience. The appeal to forsake sin is lacking. Even the fact of sin and of God's great cure is rarely touched. In this these sermons reflect accurately the temper of our day. It will be remembered that John Morley, skeptic, criticised Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his essay on the Sage of Concord, for giving so little recognition to "that horrid burden and impediment on the soul which the Churches call sin, and which, by whatever name we call it, is a very real catastrophe in the moral nature of man." It is to "this horrid burden and impediment of the soul" that the cultivated preachers of our day are giving such scant attention.

Notice, however, how the above sermons of John Wesley deal continually with the profound theme, and how like a skillful surgeon he achieves the diagnosis, the preparatory treatment, the operation, the tender nursing, and the cure. John Wesley's preaching took cognizance, indeed, of current events, but only to press home with fresh force the appeal to men to forsake sin; as, for instance, in his sermon on the earthquake at Lisbon, or that during court season on "The Great Assize." And even travel, that puissant helper to preachers of to-day

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hard-pressed for Sunday evening themes, had no place in the preaching of the Wesleys (as it had none in the preaching of the still greater scenery connoisseur, Paul), save as it lent itself to God's message for winning men; as when Charles Wesley wrote, at Land's End:

"Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,
Secure, insensible.
A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to that Heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in hell."

Every sermon of John Wesley probed for the conscience and heart and will. And the ruling passion was strong in death. There is something both pathetic and sublime in Wesley at eighty-eight, "in age and feebleness extreme," standing in the magistrate's room at Leatherhead, eighteen miles out from London, preaching his last sermon, stopping now and then from weakness, but heralding still his insistent call of evangelization, from the text, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near."

On John Richard Green's tombstone on the mountain-side at Mentone are carved the words, "Say of me, 'He died learning.'" John Eliot, the great apostle to the Indians, used the last days of his strength to teach a little Indian lad his letters. He died teaching. Of John Wesley it fairly may be said, "He died evangelizing."

How like his gifted co-laborer Whitefield, who, after preaching a half dozen times in Newburyport, Mass., on a day when he should have been under his physician's care, finds his way at night to the little inn and drags himself upstairs toward his room. Halting on the top landing,

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he sees the eager, upturned faces of the crowd below, and stops to herald once more the redeeming love of Christ, and then goes to his pillow to close his eyes that night on earth and open them in heaven on the morrow.

It was the passion for souls of these men that created Methodism and re-created apostolic Christianity in the world.

It is commonly assumed that the experimental emphasis wears out in a two or three years' pastorate. At first glance this seems to be justified by the short pastorates of many evangelistic preachers. A deeper view will show that it is not the wearing out of the experimental note. With the man of real culture that note may be infinitely rich and varied. Usually the evangelistic pastor is a man of ardent temperament, which tends to short pastorates for two reasons: first, because such men are more restless, and more ready to "move on" if situations do not quickly yield to treatment; and second, because men of that temperament are more likely to make mistakes in administration than men of less aggressive and more judicial or didactic temper.

Charles H. Spurgeon stood for forty years in his London pulpit uttering a distinctly experimental note. The *Saturday Review* once criticised him for "saying the same old thing over and over again." Mr. Spurgeon replied that the charge was quite true, for it was his principle and practice, from whatever part of the Bible he took his text, "to make across country as fast as possible to Jesus Christ." Yet after Mr. Spurgeon has been dead twenty years, his sermons are still appearing week by week, and are being sold by the thousand all over England, more of them having been sold, all told, than the

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productions of any other preacher who ever lived. That which makes the preaching of the experimental minister so fresh and vital is the fact that he is constantly dealing with things as fresh and recent as the touch of a baby's finger, or last night's sob of a mother's broken heart, or the cry of some strong swimmer, sea-swept to-day, and calling out in his agony.

According to a many-tongued report of judicious origin, the most sought-for preacher in a land of great preachers is Alexander Whyte, of Edinburgh. He has preached there for over forty years in Free St. George's Church, yet all this time he has been probing for the sins of his audiences in the most searching and overwhelming way, and applying the healing of Gilead's balm. And his church is thronged to-day, with him at threescore and thirteen, as never before. And recently, wanting a bright young man to follow the late Marcus Dods as principal of New College, Edinburgh, they laid that burden also on Dr. Whyte's shoulders. This man says: "There is natural religion and there is revealed religion, and there is national religion and there is family religion, and they are all good as far as they go. But the only soul-saving religion is the religion of a personal and spiritual experience. It has come about that all the philosophies and all the sciences and all the arts of our modern world are all so experimental and observational in their methods of research and operation, and consequently are all so fruitful. But all the time, my brethren, our own science, the science of personal religion, the science of the inward and spiritual life, is by far the most important, the most universal, and the most fruitful of all the experimental sciences; and withal it is by far the oldest of the experi-

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mental sciences, with a record and literature unparalleled in interest and importance." On another occasion Dr. Whyte said: "The spiritual preachers of our day are being constantly blamed for not tuning their pulpits to the new themes of our so progressive day. Scientific themes are pressed upon them, and critical themes and social themes and such like. But your new experience of your own sinfulness and of God's salvation, your new need and your new taste for spiritual and experimental truth will not lead you to join in that stupid demand. As intelligent men you will know where to find all the new themes of your new day, and you will be diligent students of them all, so far as your duty lies that way, and so far as your ability and opportunity go; but not on the Lord's day and not in His house of prayer and praise. The more inward and the more spiritual and the more experimental your own religion becomes, the more will you value inward and spiritual and experimental preaching."

Very many of the preachers of to-day seem, however, to depend on a complex of educational influences to lead men to a good life, rather than on the immediate influence of a gospel of regeneration through the power of the Divine Spirit. As a distinguished official of Methodism said recently to the writer, "When I was a pastor, the best men I had in my Churches had never been through any change like conversion."

That view of preaching and of the gospel may not debar a man from accomplishing good, but it will effectually prevent his presenting a message of compelling power to godless men. It paralyzes that profound urgency of soul which weeps over sinning men and pleads with them

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in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. And unless we have misread history, it is this passion for redeeming men which alone has wrought the great victories of the cross. It achieved the triumphs of the Wesleys and Edwards and Finney and Moody, and it has been the motive power of the Church's missionary conquests.

Our generation is witnessing a strong tendency to lose sight of the personal God and of the soul's immediate relationship to Him, in contemplation of the laws or processes by which He is pleased to work. The new psychology resolves conversion into a series of broodings and explosions, in which a divine element may indeed be immanent, but from which the personal God seems to have been excluded. Professor James, himself a master in the field of psychology, calls attention to this "tendency to let religion evaporate in intellectual terms." He quotes a religious paper as saying, "Perhaps the best thing that can be said of God is that He is the Inevitable Inference." And the distinguished professor punctures the substitute for a vital faith with a single sentence, "Would martyrs have sung in the flames for a mere inference, however inevitable it might be?" The obscuring of God behind a maze of complex processes would prove fatal not only to the faith of martyrs, but to the faith of tempted men and women. A religion that has nothing directly personal and dynamic and immediate to present to sinning men, by which the sense of guilt may be removed and the power of evil broken, can not save those men. It is powerless to grip the conscience and mold the life.

The story of Rev. Charles A. Berry's (who declined the call to follow Beecher at Plymouth Church) abandonment of this impersonal and indefinite religious teach-

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ing is told by Gipsy Smith, in the words that the great English Congregationalist described it to J. H. Jowett: "As I sat in my house in Bolton, Lancashire, late one night, when everybody else had retired, there came a knock at my door. When I opened it, there stood a typical Lancashire girl, with her shawl over her head and with clogs on her feet. 'Are you the minister?' she asked. 'Yes.' 'Then I want you to come and get mother in.' Berry, thinking it was some drunken brawl, said, 'You must get a policeman.' 'O, no,' said the girl; 'my mother's dying, and I want you to get her into salvation.' 'Where do you live?' 'I live so-and-so, a mile and a half from here.' 'Well,' said Berry, 'is there no minister nearer than I?' 'O, yes; but I want you, and you have got to come.' Berry said to me: 'I was in my slippers, and I soliloquized and wondered what the people of the Church would think if they saw their pastor walking late at night with a girl with a shawl over her head. I did all I could to get out of it, but it was no use. That girl was determined, and I had to dress and go. I found the place was a house of ill-fame. In the lower rooms they were drinking and telling lewd stories, and upstairs I found the poor woman dying. I sat down and talked about Jesus as the beautiful example, and extolled Him as a leader and teacher; and she looked at me out of her eyes of death and said: 'Mister, that's no good for the likes o' me. I don't want an example—I'm a sinner.'" And Berry said to me, 'Jowett, there I was face to face with a poor soul dying, and had nothing to tell her. I had no gospel. I thought of what my mother had taught me, and I told her the old story of God's love in Christ, dying for sinful men, whether I believed

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it or not. "Now you are getting at it," said the woman. "That's what I want. That's the story for me." And Berry turned to Jowett and said, 'I got her in; and I got in myself.'"

A striking difference in the religious thinking of to-day and a hundred years ago is the lightness with which men view religious testimony and the distrust with which they accept what even their own consciousness registers. John Wesley, for instance, took every opportunity of conversing with persons whose experience was of a marked sort, and devoted many pages of his Journal to these narrations—far more, as Dr. W. L. Watkinson has pointed out, than he devoted to current historical events. His preaching and even his theology was based in part upon these experimental data.

To-day it is popular to dismiss experience testimonies as due to "suggestion," "imagination," "a too confident interpretation of mental states," etc. This results in part from the influence of an alleged scientific "new psychology" which attempts to explain all moral and spiritual changes on a purely naturalistic basis. It is in part the result of that unwillingness of the carnal man to believe that any man has progressed further in the pursuit of the pure and good than himself. Now as of old "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."

We have abundant place for the science of psychology; and the more penetrating and exact it becomes, the greater will be our delight in it. But let it not be a psychology that starts its operations by bowing God off the frontier of the soul He has created. Let it not be a psychology which attributes the conversion of the soul to the same sort of emotional explosion as the hot wrath of a Ken-

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tucky vendetta, or that explains the ethical revolution and soul glory of a young man's spiritual transformation in the terms of his development from adolescence to physical manhood.

At the time that Methodism arose in England there was little in the current preaching that might not have been uttered with equal consistency by a Mohammedan or Jew or Buddhist with equal consistence and impotence. As Lecky puts it: "A decent Chinaman who took Confucius seriously might have preached nine-tenths of the sermons of that period. Beyond a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity, and a general acknowledgment of the veracity of the Gospel narratives, the divines of that day taught little which might not have been taught by the disciples of Socrates or Confucius." We are in danger to-day, not of reverting to the phraseology and arguments of the deism of that period, but by a new nomenclature and newer mode of argumentation, of making God as much an absentee from the world He has made as did those deists of the eighteenth century.

The great evangelical revival under the Wesleys restored the emphasis of the apostolic age to Christianity in England. It was a renaissance of the experimental note. We need another such renewal.

CHAPTER X

Official Assemblies and the Experimental Note

"It is a good thing to have a committee of the General Assembly on evangelistic work. It will be a much better thing for the Church to do with consecrated persistence and devotion, its evangelistic work. After all, what else is the Church for? Or any member of the Church? All our elaborate machinery for self-preservation and self-development is right enough, but it is secondary. It is pathetic that so much of the time and strength of the general council of the Church should have to be spent upon matters pertaining solely to the administration of our machinery, while comparatively little time is given to the immediate business for which the Church exists, the evangelization of the world." (*The Presbyterian*, Editorial on "The General Assembly.")

OFFICIAL ASSEMBLIES AND THE EXPERIMENTAL NOTE

THE onlooker at the various official gatherings of the Protestant Churches is impressed by the order and dispatch of business. The features of these gatherings which bulk largest are the reports of committees and the appeal for, or reports of, funds for various benevolent causes.

Among the Methodist Conferences the name of every minister is called twice at the annual gathering: first, at roll-call, to find whether or not he is present; second, to hear whether or not he has taken "all the collections." That is the one time during the entire year when he is expected to express his personality and his achievement for the year, and he does so in the phrase, "All the collections taken," or, "Not all the collections taken." With the majority of men in the ministry of this great denomination, that is the only word ever heard from them in the only gatherings where they all come together, year after year. They may, indeed, speak to other questions that arise, and some of them do. But the majority content themselves, for ten years at a stretch, with announcing on the Conference floor, as the sum total of their achievements, "All the collections taken."

The other outstanding feature of Conference business is the formation and reports of various committees, most of them having to do also with the collections, although

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some deal with courses of study for preachers and other matters. The chief inspirational features of the Conferences are the addresses of the bishop and the secretaries of the various benevolence boards and the representatives of the educational institutions. Here again the focus, excepting the bishop's address, is financial.

Now, these benevolences are all of the noblest sort, and deserve all the effort, and more than the effort, which is put forth in their behalf. And perhaps the prevailing method is the wisest available to forward the Kingdom. It is described here for the purpose of noting the disappearance of the experimental note from these gatherings.

Any one who will take the trouble to compare the order of procedure of the past quarter of a century with the order of procedure in the first Conference of the Methodists, as conducted by John Wesley, will mark the contrast. According to the printed "Minutes," the first Conference "proceeded to consider, first, 'What to preach; second, How to regulate the doctrine, discipline, and practice of the ministry and society.' Repentance, Justification, Sanctification, and the Witness of the Spirit were defined with precision. No other tenets were discussed save as they were related to these. . . . At the second Conference as at the first, all dogmatic subjects not immediately connected with personal religion were avoided."

The following questions were asked, and the replies were formally recorded in the Conference Minutes:

1. Is assurance absolutely necessary to our being in the favor of God?
2. Does a man believe any longer than he sees a reconciled God?
3. Does faith supersede holiness or good works?

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4. When does inward sanctification begin?
5. Is complete sanctification ordinarily given until a little before death?
6. Would not one who was thus sanctified be incapable of worldly business?
7. Do not some of the assistants preach too much on the wrath and too little on the love of God?
8. Need we ever preach the terrors of the Lord to those who know they are accepted of Him?

(Stevens's "History of Methodism," Vol. I, p. 311.)

And so, year after year, these Conferences of Mr. Wesley and his preachers dealt with the fundamental things of the soul, and the heralds of the Methodist evangel were continually keyed up to their high calling. The *esprit de corps* of the organization was maintained, and of each man it could be said, as he went forth to the conflict, "his strength was as the strength of ten, because his heart was pure." Vast sums of money, considering the poverty of Methodists, were raised for charity and for education and missions, and church building. Larger sums, far, proportionately to their means, than we are raising now under a changed emphasis.

It is true that Methodism has become a vast and complex organization, with manifold interests and ramifications. The condition referred to is a gradual development and carries no blame. Yet this does not alter the fact that our emphasis has changed, and with the change of emphasis has undeniably come a loss of power. It carries with it also the peril of developing an overshadowing ecclesiasticism. It was the erection of ecclesiasticism above ideas and ideals and Christian experience which was responsible for the development of Roman Catholi-

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cism out of an originally pure Church. How absolutely necessary it is for the Church in every age "to wash out its eyes with pure colors!"—the "pure colors" in this sense being the spirit and doctrines of the apostolic era.

"For the accomplishment of the stupendous but magnificent work now thrust upon it the Church needs an extraordinary increase of spirituality. We have, as Methodists, a highly organized Church, but machinery alone will not bring us the victory. Our boards and appeals are all in vain if the labor is not 'in the Lord.' Organization as a means to an end is most desirable, but when regarded as an end in itself it becomes ruinous. Organization, indeed, may lapse into unspirituality—to trusting in ecclesiastical 'chariots.' Harangues for money may weary and react if the Church be not filled with an overflowing tide of the Holy Spirit. There must be a profound consciousness of the necessity of absolute dependence upon God in this universal missionary enterprise—reliance upon that divine grace and help which only He can supply. The souls of men must be mightily stirred. It is only the highest spiritual life which can serve the entire progress of the world. And, action and reaction working together, this progress in turn will increase the spiritual life. The transformation through which mankind in the non-Christian nations is now passing should not only stimulate and enlarge the missionary outlook of the Church, but should impel all Christian people to seek a deeper fellowship with God in Christ.

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"The Churches need, definitely and certainly, a more passionate love for Jesus. It would be insensate folly to be raising funds and sending missionaries abroad to pro-

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claim faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior of all men if the faith in Him of those who give and send is itself honey-combed with doubt and half-hearted. The love of Christ must contrain us—the compelling desire to share with every man ‘like precious faith.’ ”*

We preachers are giving out to others all the year. We may scarcely open our hearts to our lay members as to our own deepest spiritual needs. The natural place to secure help and regirding of strength is the Annual Conference. There maturer and holier men who have dealt with like difficulties may be found. But for a third of a century Conference programs have had no place for this, save in exceptional cases. The most helpful thing of the week has been the bishop’s address to the class coming into full membership. Inspiring as this has usually been, it forms too brief a part of the Conference to meet the urgent spiritual needs of the large company of men who find in the Annual Conference their chief source of quickening and enlargement. The Roman Catholic Church attempts to meet this need in its priests by annual “Retreats.” Protestantism has nothing answering to these, while those periods of self-examination and spiritual quickening which characterized the earlier Conferences of the people called Methodists have been crowded out by the financial exigencies of the Church’s development.

Popular sentiment to-day, both within and outside Methodism, lauds Mr. Wesley to the skies; yet in the same brèath it disowns or ignores the instruments with which he worked. By a strange disjuncture of thinking the heroism and unselfishness and purity and power of

* *Western Christian Advocate.*

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the man are apotheosized, while the convictions and doctrines and practices which kindled the fires of his heroism and power are discredited. You could no more have had the achievements of John Wesley without his intense experimental interpretation of Christianity than you could have sunlight and atmospheric heat without the sun's fires. This is peculiarly emphasized by the fact that Wesley exercised an impotent ministry both in America and England for the first thirteen years of his ministerial life, before the emerging of those great experimental truths in his own life and preaching which, immediately on their appearance, in 1738, began to shake England. Every intelligent student of Church history realizes that Methodism was born not at Oxford, in even a remote sense, but at Aldersgate Street, London, when John Wesley's soul emerged from doubt and gloom into conscious sonship and personal holiness.

At the present hour there are some encouraging signs of a renewed experimental emphasis. Our Congregational brethren are gathering in great numbers every summer at Northfield to kindle anew their torches at the best thought and profoundest spirituality of two continents. The same thing is true of our Presbyterian brethren in their similar gatherings at Winona, while an increasing number of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church are adding to their heavy burdens that of giving Annual Conference addresses on themes vital to the preachers' spiritual development and enlarged usefulness as soul-winners. Indeed, we have never heard such searching, moving addresses to ministers as those to which we have listened the past year from two or three of the most cultured and scholarly bishops of Methodism.

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The General Conference Commission on Evangelism has sent to the Annual Conferences as heralds of an intenser evangelism a score of pastors whose work has been characterized by passion for souls and by judicious methods, while as we write a Laymen's Evangelistic Propaganda is preparing which, it is devoutly hoped, may do for evangelism what the Laymen's Missionary Movement has been doing for foreign missions.

CHAPTER XI

Culture and Evangelism

"Creep into thy narrow bed;
Creep and let no more be said!
Vain thy onset! All stands fast.
Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease!
Geese are swans and swans are geese,
Let them have it how they will;
Thou art tired; best be still.

They out-talked thee, hissed thee, tore thee?
Better men fared thus before thee;
Fired their ringing shot and passed,
Hotly charged, and sank at last.

"Charge once more, then, and be dumb!
Let the victors when they come,—
When the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall."

(Matthew Arnold.)

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FOR a generation past the young preacher has faced a perplexing situation. The impulse that took him into the ministry was that of soul-winning. It was the supreme element in his call. But on his initiation into the clerical brotherhood he discovered that evangelism was not the characteristic note of the most popular and prominent preachers. He discovered that it was rather an inferior order of intellects in the ministry that emphasized soul-winning. And often these men were noisy and unrefined, and lacking in attractiveness of personality; while too often their preaching was innocent of thoughtful content. The non-evangelistic preachers were by no means all thoughtful or attractive preachers, but for the greater part they held before themselves the culture ideal. Their preaching was intellectually respectable, and often pleasing; yet it contained no appeal to men to forsake sin—no pleading, wooing note.

As a biographer of Hugh Price Hughes says of him when he entered the ministry: "‘Revivalism,’ as it was termed, was discounted at college, and Mr. Hughes, among others, laughed it to scorn. Men who were not able to grapple with the intellectual difficulties of their age were looked down upon. . . . Mr. Hughes had adopted a literary and intellectual style and had become rather sardonic. He labored rather for rhetorical effect

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than to bring men to Christ, and his preaching was largely devoid of those special qualities which melt the heart and bring the will into captivity. He thought that intellect was the great weapon in the hands of an able young preacher—to know and to grapple with the thought of the time, those thoughts forever fermenting within him, was his peculiar province.”

Thus it has been that young men entering the ministry have been met at the very threshold with a test of unusual severity—the test as to whether they would be dead-in-earnest, soul-winning preachers, pursuing men as the hound his quarry, or should accept the lower ideal of a cultivated, pleasant lectureship, with the duties of a parochial chaplaincy added, where nothing in the way of morally dynamic effects was either expected or desired.

This has been a severe trial to many a young minister. His college and seminary training has enamored him of culture and high thinking. The crudity and intellectual slovenliness of many of the evangelistic school have been humiliating to him. Yet he has been tormented with the conviction that the average “popular” culturist preacher was at an infinite remove from the true ambassador of Jesus Christ. The religious experience that impelled him to the ministry forbids his unqualified acceptance of the culturist model.

At this juncture the question is settled for many a young preacher by the influence of his congregation on him. He receives a pronounced “promotion,” and finds more exacting demands on his intellect, together with an atmosphere of felicitation for efforts of a distinctly cultural type; and soon the question of the type his ministry is to take is answered. He joins the ranks of the cul-

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turists; and presently, when some hot-headed evangelist excoriates him as "unspiritual" and "worldly," he develops into an out-and-out opponent of evangelism—he who was once full of its passion and in whose call it constituted so overwhelming an element! It is probable that this transformation has happened to thousands of ministers of the gospel.

On the other hand, not a few men have confounded evangelism with mere emotionalism. A sermon with plenty of physical unction and an attenuated intellectual content has been their conception of an evangelistic sermon. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it," has been their favorite text, forgetting that where there is no adequate intellectual preparation the mouth is filled only with wind. Intellectual indolence has been engendered, and men who bade fair to make splendid gospel preachers degenerate into mere ranters and desk-pounders, whose libraries are an abomination of desolation, and whose platitudes are a grief to godly laymen.

But many a preacher sees the folly of falling into either of these camps. He determines to be neither an uncultivated Philistine nor an intellectual Pharisee. He determines to have commerce with the best intellects of all time—to acquaint himself "with the best that has been known and said in the world, and thus with the history of the human spirit." He determines to make preparation for every pulpit effort as though there were no God to help. But he determines also to then throw himself on the help of God as though he had made no preparation. He determines to press all the knowledge and all the skill and winsomeness and persuasive power with which culture can endow him into pleading with

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men to be reconciled to God, into that "culture of the soul which is the soul of all culture."

Many are realizing that without the breadth of vision that comes from culture there can not be a broad sympathy and charity that makes a ministry inclusive and far-reaching. Provincial prejudices, the limitations of early training and environment, will narrow and cramp the preacher's vision and message and render impossible the largest fruitage. Without a knowledge of secular and ecclesiastical history any religious movement is sure to develop fanaticism. The culture element is requisite to a sense of proportion and perspective. Paul was able, because of his earlier contact with Gentile life and culture, to perform a work that was psychologically impossible to Peter and the other apostles trained in Palestine. Yet they see also that all this culture may exist and be impotent without the passionate purpose to win men to Christ. That must flame at the center as a propelling power, a constructive life principle, if dynamic results are achieved. Erasmus had all the culture of his generation; indeed, he was its consummate flower. But he was of small value to the Reformation compared to Luther and Melancthon, the men with hearts of fire. They have seen young preachers broadened out by contact with cultured men and by the studies of a progressive theology. And they have seen their dogmatism and bigotry disappear, and their angularities and theological crudities; but the trouble was that they lost everything positive with it. They lost every conviction they ever had that had in it sufficient dynamic to move men even to a cleaner style. As Mr. Gladstone said of Matthew Arnold, they "combined a sincere devotion to the Christian religion with

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a faculty for presenting it in such a form as to be recognizable neither by friend nor foe." Strong only in criticism of the evangelical position, they were weak and uncertain in stating any positive, constructive views of their own, and hence their ministry has utterly failed. So they have determined to unite culture and evangelism.

Henry Drummond showed our generation that it is not necessary to abandon positive, spiritual Christianity in order to the modern intellectual viewpoint. He proved that it is possible to combine the broadest culture and most exquisite personal graces with the most searching and persuasive evangelism. His ministry to those elusive classes of British life, the society women of London and Edinburgh, and the boys of the streets, prove how irresistible such a ministry as evangelism plus culture can be.

And a peculiarly valuable phase of Mr. Drummond's contribution to our generation is his showing that a Christian worker can hold the most advanced views of science and Biblical criticism and yet remain a devoted and successful winner of souls. Henry Drummond without his culture would have been a useful preacher in limited constituencies; and Henry Drummond without his evangelism would have been a helpful teacher of religion and science. But it took the combination of culture and evangelism to make that peculiarly striking and attractive figure that brought blessing to multitudes of college men in the past generation, and that ushered in new methods in dealing with boys and youth.

Hugh Price Hughes illustrated also the combination of culture and evangelism. How he began the ministry with an ambition to make a reputation as a scholarly and intellectual preacher we have already seen. The whole

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Christian world knows how, without diminishing one whit his interest in sociological and literary subjects, he threw himself with passionate ardor into the work of soul-winning. And the writer has seen the processions of seekers pouring over the platform into the Inquiry Rooms at St. James Hall, West London, at the close of his overwhelming appeals to men to decide immediately for God. Hugh Price Hughes did more than any other man of his generation to call back the Wesleyan Church on his side of the water and the Methodist Church on our side to a sense of its departure from Wesley's ideal and to a renewal of its consecration to that ideal—which was also the apostolic ideal.

It is not easy to combine culture and evangelism. It is difficult enough to put one's best intellectual self into a sermon. But when, in addition, one must put his highest spiritual self into it—and not only his highest self, but his highest *possible* spiritual self—one has a task that calls for a self-denial and devotion that are far from natural and easy. It means that a man must not only prepare to persuade men with all the wisdom and winsomeness that he can muster, but that he must keep himself morally and spiritually aseptic, in order that no in-born shadow of evil shall infect his influence over souls.

But the man who is willing steadily to pay this price—"steadily" because it requires that "dying daily" of which St. Paul speaks—has before him the most puissant and beautiful ministry of which the human personality is capable, and one which will yield the deepest joy of the human spirit.

CHAPTER XII

Where the Preacher's Victory Is Lost
or Won

"To step out of self-life into Christ-life; to lie still and let Him lift you out of it; to fold your hands close and hide your face upon the hem of His garment; to let Him lay His cooling, soothing, healing hands upon your soul, and draw all the hurry and fever from its veins; to realize that you are not a mighty messenger, an important worker of His, full of care and responsibility, but only a little child, with a Father's gentle bidding to heed and fulfill; to lay your busy plans and ambitions confidently in His hands—as the child brings its broken toys at its mother's call; to serve Him by waiting; to praise Him by saying, 'Holy, Holy, Holy;' to cease to hurry so that you lose sight of His face; to learn to follow Him and not to run ahead of orders; to cease to live in self and for self, and to live in Him and for Him; to love His honor more than your own; to be a clear medium for His life-tide to shine and glow through—this is consecration—this is rest." (*Christian Work.*)

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

"My hands were filled with many things,
Which I did precious hold
As any treasure of a king's,
Silver, or gems, or gold.
The Master came and touched my hands,
The scars were in His own.
And at His feet my treasures sweet,
Fell shattered, one by one;
'I must have empty hands,' said He,
'Wherewith to work My works through thee.'

"My hands were stained with marks of toil,
Defiled with dust of earth.
And I my work did oft-times soil,
And render little worth.
The Master came and touched my hands,
And crimson were His own.
And when, amazed, on mine I gazed,
Lo! every stain was gone.
'I must have cleansed hands,' said He,
'Wherewith to work My works through thee.'

"My hands were strong in fancied strength,
But not in power divine,
And bold to take up tasks at length
That were not His, but mine.
The Master came and touched my hands,
And might was in His own.
But mine, since then, have powerless been,
Save His were laid thereon;
'And it is only thus,' said He,
'That I can work My works through thee.'"

(*British Weekly.*)

WHERE THE PREACHER'S VICTORY IS LOST OR WON

IN the contest for souls the outcome depends on the preacher's own heart. If he is feeding on old manna, in vain will he invite men to the gospel feast. If his spiritual life is stale and perfunctory, his message can not be vitalizing. If the preacher is baffled and beaten in his contest with temptation, he goes into the battle for souls whipped.

This does not mean that he must be a perfect man. Then might none of us attempt to represent our Lord. It does mean that his religious experience must be *vital*. His knowledge of divine things must be first-hand, not hearsays; and it must be recent. Hounds in the chase will not follow a stale scent. And an audience is quick to detect whether a message comes fresh from a man's inner life. It is inexplicable how unerring their judgment of this is. It amounts to an intuition. Many a preacher has delivered the same message, almost word for word, that on a previous occasion has wrought large things, and the second time it never turned a hair. The writer has had this humiliating experience. Artistically, the second performance has been an improvement on the first. Why was the second a failure? Because it was not vital. It did not come fresh from the mint of God in His dealings with the preacher's soul.

A celebrated pianist was asked why he kept up in-

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cessant practice, when his reputation had already girded the globe. He replied: "If I go a day without practicing I can notice the difference in my playing; if two days, the members of my company notice the difference; if three days, the audience notices the difference." A preacher's audience is as sensitive to the freshness of his message.

In soul-winning nothing will take the place of this. The message may or may not be eloquent or learned or homiletically correct; but if it is not vital, it is powerless. This is a chief reason why so many preachers lose soul-winning power with age. The number of men who were potent soul-winners at thirty, but are impotent at fifty or sixty, is startlingly large.

After all the excuses have been made: that we become calmer and more didactic with age; that our gifts become administrative and judicial rather than hortatory as we grow older; that "old men are for counsel, and young men are for war"—the real reason remains to be reckoned with: the loss of vitality in our own spiritual life. Older men whose religious experiences remain fresh and tender and vital, keep on winning souls. "They bring forth fruit in old age." Dr. Samuel A. Keen, of Ohio, continued the peerless winner of souls to the very end. Uncle John Vassar, the Baptist colporteur-evangelist, showed no diminution of persuasive power in old age. D. L. Moody still exercised his marvelous power when he felt the weight of sixty years. When the apostle to the Gentiles was "such an one as Paul the aged," he was the same potent pleader with men to be reconciled to God as when he started on his great career.

The secret of it all? Primarily a vital experience in the saving power of Christ. No going back to forty

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years ago, or twenty, or ten years ago, to get a convincing and renewing view of God, but to the vision of last week or yesterday.

It does not weigh as to how exalted has been one's experience in the things of God. If it is an old experience it is a powerless one. Stereotyped experiences, like stereotyped terminology, are wooden. They move no one.

Hence it is that ministers who preach much better sermons than they did when young men, and who know indefinitely more, and who can handle difficult situations more adroitly, and can organize forces more wisely, and can do a hundred things more perfectly, can not do the supremest thing one-hundredth part so well. And that is the tragedy of the Christian ministry to-day.

Because this is true many a minister comes to discount soul-winning. When he sees what success at it unfurnished men often have, and when he recalls what results accompanied his own efforts when he was but a callow youth in the ministry, a certain revulsion takes place, and he secretly or openly depreciates the work of evangelism as an inferior ministry. His own self-respect seems to compel it. Conscious of the integrity of his purpose and of his riper powers, there seems no other reasonable conclusion.

Yet he is wrong. We say it gently and sympathetically. He has lost the battle for souls in his own heart; for he has not paid the price of soul-winning. Luther and Wesley and Whitefield counted it of primary importance to keep in *vital* touch with God. Out of their busiest days they would take hours to get their souls into conscious communion with God. They believed they

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could accomplish indefinitely more, working fewer hours at their tasks when they were spiritually at their best, than in working more hours when spiritually depleted. Samuel Johnson complained that Wesley would not tarry at his lodgings to give him a chance to get acquainted: that just as he himself had crossed his legs and settled down for a good talk, the strenuous Methodist was up and away to meet one of his endless "engagements." Yet Wesley, though he had not time to talk to the most brilliant conversationalist of his day, had plenty of time to commune with God, and there was the hiding of his power. How earnestly George Müller pressed home this truth on his brethren: "The Lord's work may have urgent claims upon your attention, but I deliberately repeat, it is of supreme, paramount importance that you should seek above all other things to have your soul truly happy in God Himself!"

We are well aware how little this accords with the temper of our time. It seems sentimental and lacking in energy. But it is a superficial view to so consider it. The fact is, the kind of heart-searching and praying necessary to vital spiritual life is the hardest mental work there is. Nothing exceeds it in concentration of thinking, and nothing requires a more masculine effort of the will and a severer discipline of the moral nature. It comprehends that "concentration of faculties and bringing of the passions to heel" which Herbert Spencer counted the marks of a disciplined mind. Out of such spiritual exercises we have seen men come exhausted physically—actually limp. It is no diletante business for a man to take himself in hand to get absolutely right with God. He is doing business in great waters.

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And why should we account time so spent wasted, even though taken from visible tasks, if it be a preparation for greater tasks? Two pugilists spend months in training for an encounter that will occupy only an hour or two. Why should we account an hour or two a day spent in keying up our spiritual life to the divine level wasted? We are to grapple with influences that are bearing men downward. We are to attempt their rescue from the fatal swirl. If we shall succeed, it will be because we are spiritually athletic. Weaklings never can grip them. If we influence men under the sway of fascinating evils, it will be because there is in us an inner poise, strength, and spiritual resourcefulness which will compel their attention. We are not pleading for hypnotism, but for spiritual dynamic. And many of us lack this because we are busy with a thousand trifles, hurrying hither and thither like the stormy petrels, missing the reserve power and poise that come only from contact with the Infinite. We perspire under the task of "serving tables," but do not take time to get hold of God's gift of apostolic power.

It may be that the atmosphere in which some of us have been trained has been unfriendly to real devotion. While our earlier influences were sufficient to turn us into the ministry, they have not been sufficient to beget within us a dominant spiritual impulse, or such an earlier spiritual impulse has been depleted by the later associations of social or college life. Such deterioration we have seen take place again and again in young men who came to college with the purpose of preparing for the ministry. With some of them the decline was so marked as that they abandoned the plan to preach the gospel and entered some secular calling. Others have gone on out into their

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sacred vocation to perform their duties in a perfunctory way, without the moral force to move men.

In America conditions are better in our colleges than they were in England when Liddon, forty years ago, wrote his famous essay about the candidates for the ministry in the Anglican Church: "They pass, a strenuous stream of life and energy, from the lectures, the boats, the unions, the college chapels, the haunts and associations which are often too degrading to mention, to the pulpits, the deathbeds, the altars of the Church of Jesus Christ. They may have escaped in its most repulsive forms 'the corruption that is in the world through lust.' They may in better moments have made real efforts to rise on eagles' wings in renewed strength to Him who made the soul for Himself, and who alone can unfold and satisfy its complex faculties and its mysterious instincts. But the atmosphere in which they move chills and repels the efforts of divine grace. The well-appointed sarcasm, the suppressed look of pity of some intellectual acquaintance of whose society they are proud, no less than the rude jest of the boon companion to which they defer without respecting him—all this does its work in counteracting influences which might help men at our universities on the road to heaven, and even prepare them in some measure to acquire the temper and experience of the guide of souls."

But conditions of university life, while better than in England in Liddon's day, are still unfriendly enough to the development of vital godliness. And the number of men who enter the ministry with the consciousness of God painfully faint and intermittent, is large.

Whether it be from lack of virile spirituality in col-

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lege days, or whether from the fading out of God later on, and the reassertion of once-conquered evils, which always reappear when the consciousness of God's presence fades out of the life, the result is the same—a nerveless ministry, moral and spiritual impotence in the cure of souls.

In a recent address to a company of ministers,¹ Dr. J. H. Jowett said: "The force of water is determined by the height from which it flows, and the force of our message is determined by the height at which we live. If we live with Paul in the 'heavenly places,' we will speak with the power of the Holy Ghost. But if we live just an inch above the world, our words will have little power. . . . If we have lost our close relationship with God, the problem is, how can we recover it? The first thing we have to do is this: I have got to hold fast firmly and steadily to the principle that of all things that need doing by me this thing is supreme—to keep near God. We can not allow ourselves to drift. We can not leave the matter to chance or accident. I have got to affirm to my soul, 'Now, my soul, thou hast this, that, and the other thing to do to-day; but, my soul, thy supreme work is to live near God.' In the presence of details you lose the sense of the (relative) value of things. Use ten minutes every morning to write down the program of the day; then take the size of those things. Use the quiet moments to make the estimate. I say: 'My soul, everything on thy program will be futile and ineffective unless thou shalt live near God.' . . . Have a fixed season for communion with God. The early morning is the time for me. 'My voice shalt thou hear

¹At Northfield, Mass., 1909.

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in the morning.' ” (Alexander Whyte, the distinguished preacher at St. George’s, Edinburgh, says he has to wait until everybody has gone to bed.) “Have a time, and stick to it. Put the newspaper aside, and go into thy closet and pray. Use every help to make your devotion real. . . . Practice the tremendous art of praying without ceasing. My organist played one day a very beautiful air which remained with me as a background for days afterward. I wonder if we could have God like that? I wonder if we could have God interpenetrating our lives? If we had that sense of God, the world would call in vain, the bubbles and baubles would lure us in vain, and the stupefactions of the priestly office would not affect us. Our lives would be fragrant with God. We should be luminous with power and cleansing. Our speech would be impressive, and our prayers would be laden with grace. Let us stagger our people. The Lord help me that when my people see me in the pulpit again they may be staggered with the presence of God.”

“Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parched grounds revive us with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower.
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth, a sunny outline, brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!”

—REV. R. C. JOYNT.

The intellectual leader of British Methodism for a third of a century has been Dr. W. L. Watkinson, keen, incisive, and luminous; with a mastery of English that has made him the admiration of evangelical England. It is no morbid or rhapsodic sentimentalist, therefore,

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who utters this striking testimony to the importance of experimental religion: "Now, brethren, I speak from personal experience when I say that there can be little or no power as long as conscience or the Holy Spirit points out in our life objectionable things which we make no attempt to remove. It may be a personal indulgence; it may be a business practice; it may be a hobby which absorbs too much of our time; it may be that 'Vanity Fair' is preferred to 'The Land of Beulah;' it may be that the three-penny bits and sixpences do not amount to the legal tithes of the Jew and are much below the privileges of a Christian. Is it possible that some such flaw in your life hinders the display of the Power? Something, as people say, not wrong in itself, and yet wrong in you because the Lord has asked for it? Some time ago I had such an experience myself. Conscience suggested an alteration in my life. I argued the matter out with my conscience, and I thought I had a very good time, but my conscience paid no attention whatever to the arguments. I therefore voted my conscience as behind the times and went on. But one day, when I was standing in the open air at one of our camp-meetings, as my good friend, Mr. Livingstone, was speaking, I had the matter again pressed strongly on my mind, and there and then I said in my heart, I will do it. I can't explain the result except by saying there came something like a lightning flash from heaven and a feeling as if the Holy Spirit had said audibly, 'That is what I was waiting for,' and with it there came peace and joy and power."

We are not concerned with Dr. Watkinson's figure of speech. With his temperament we should have expected a reference to "a still small voice" rather than "a

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lightning flash from heaven." We are deeply interested, however, that this thoughtful, commanding leader so stressed the Experimental Note in his own thinking.

If we place alongside Dr. Watkinson that other great leader of British Wesleyanism in our generation, Hugh Price Hughes—temperamentally at the farthest remove from him, and on questions of method always in a different camp, yet in this stressing of the Experimental Note even more emphatic than Dr. Watkinson, as all of us who have been with him in his own home are well aware. Both his biographers, his daughter and Mr. J. Gregory Mantle, refer to a deepening of Mr. Hughes's spiritual life during his pastorate at Brighton. Says his daughter: "Yet Brighton, for all the intellectual interests that he crowded into it, was essentially a spiritual crisis in his life rather than an intellectual. A Holiness Convention was held in the town a few months before he left, in the summer of 1875, under the presidency of Mr. and Mrs. Pearsall Smith (Mr. Mantle refers also to the presence and teachings of Pastor Theodore Monod), whose sessions deeply interested him. The idea that sin is not a necessary condition of existence, but that a special outpouring of God's Spirit can lead to holiness in act and thought, was something of a revelation to many of the religious of the day, who had come to regard man's proneness to sin as inevitable. My father recognized in the addresses, to which he was a rapt listener, a repetition of Wesley's doctrine of 'entire sanctification,' which Methodism had largely forgotten. Deeper still sank the declaration that 'entire sanctification' was based on 'entire surrender.' He had surrendered himself years ago at his conversion, and was continually repeating the act; but what of a surren-

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der deeper than he had hitherto dreamed? Certain ambitions lurked at the back of his mind, which he was silently determined to cherish, outside any consultation of God's will concerning him. They had so crept into the stream of his existence that, until that moment, perhaps, he had scarcely differentiated them from other channels. He would never have done anything unworthy to gratify these—he loved Christ too much for that; but none the less there would have been a friction in his inner history, which was henceforward to disappear. . . . He spoke little of his inmost feelings, but I can remember his referring two or three times to a period of painful inner history which preceded his attendance at this convention. The new conception that it gave him put an end to this. In the deepest sense 'His will' became 'our peace,' and a peace that was joy, which nothing ever ruffled, however agitated the surface of his life, however keen the momentary periods of disappointment and depression."

Soon after this Mr. Hughes's ministry developed that power of sustained evangelism which brought a new birth of life and influence to British Wesleyanism and which has so largely influenced other lands. This, too, when Mr. Hughes at the time of his leaving the university "laughed revivalism to scorn" and "could not but despise preachers of the gospel pure and simple who led men to what was called 'decision' there and then. That it was necessary and admirable work he had not a doubt, but it was not to be his. Any good fellow who had mastered the rudiments could be a revivalist."

There is no doubt that this deepening of Mr. Hughes's personal faith and consecration at Brighton was the source

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of that life-long passion for souls which causes the social reformer and progressive theologian to be almost lost sight of in the peerless evangelist. At any rate it indicates how pronounced was his emphasis on personal Christian experience. Shortly before his death he manifested the same profound interest: "Walking with a companion down Shaftesbury Avenue, he dilated and glowed over special times and seasons. . . . 'Do n't you find it helpful—a necessity?' he inquired. 'I do, these times and seasons of self-examination and spiritual rejuvenation and encouragement.' It was always a favorite method of his to inaugurate a new 'campaign' or session with a mission or convention of some kind." (P. 622, "Life of Hugh Price Hughes," by His Daughter.)

"When one that holds communion with the skies,
Has filled his urn where these pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
It is as though an angel shook his wings.
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
And tells us whence those treasures are supplied."
—REV. R. C. JOYNT.

CHAPTER XIII

A Spiritual Vacuum the Church's In-
vitation to Fanaticism

"The inquiry room, this time as before, brings its terrible revelation of the vast multitude of unregenerate Church members. I have dealt with several men of position who knew the letter of Scripture as they knew their own names, but who had no more idea of free grace and a personal Christ than a Hot-tentot." (Henry Drummond's Life, by G. A. Smith, p. 145.)

"The world listens at our church doors, and furtively peers through the windows, pursued by the idea that a rushing mighty wind may be heard, or the glow of Pentecostal fire be seen. When it discovers that the mystic hinterland is as dark to the Church as to the world itself, the world will cease to trouble about the half-filled temples of the faith. She has her own ethical systems and prefers her own gatherings for mutual improvement. She cares little about a Church that shakes hands with her over a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, but has no story of spiritual mystery." (J. Compton Rickett, D. L., Member Parliament, to Congregational Union of Great Britain.)

A SPIRITUAL VACUUM THE CHURCH'S INVITATION TO FANATICISM

A SPIRITUAL vacuum in the Churches is their invitation to "freak" developments of religion.

A low pressure of religious vitality operates in two ways: it alienates the masses from the Church, and it sends hungry-hearted people of limited knowledge off on tangents.

An atmospheric vacuum is the sure forerunner of violent changes. High winds rush in and fill the vacant places. A spiritual vacuum in the Church operates in the same way. Untaught people, conscious only of unrest, hear the voices of teachers and religious organizations making extravagant claims of authority and holding out extravagant promises of benefit, and veer off into fanaticism. This is sufficient to account for the vogue of Christian Science and Mormonism and various phases of Dowieism. The heaviest inroads have been made by these cults on congregations where the public services have partaken most largely of the entertainment variety. Those Churches that have been content with smaller audiences, but that have thoroughly indoctrinated them, have suffered much less; while those congregations which have kept a high tide of spiritual life have lost practically none to the freak cults.

It is apparent that arguments alone, be they ever so strong, can never stop the growth of fanatical creeds.

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These cults have been annihilated, logically, a score of times. A man with a hungry heart is not moved by argument. He can be convinced only by satisfying that hunger. The Church must win, not by the strength of her negations, but by the power of her affirmations—by the power of her constructive, positive, saving grace. It is the leakage of saving, comforting, satisfying grace as an experimental possession that impoverishes the Church and makes her members the easy prey of strange gods. Dowieism and Eddyism and spiritualism and Mormonism could never have achieved the vogue they have if a vital and virile instead of a conventional Christianity had held the Churches. We must learn obedience by the things we have suffered.

Nor is it the ignorant simply who have been alienated from the Church by a conventional type of religion. When we remember how intensely Thomas H. Huxley admired General Charles George Gordon, accounting him one of the two greatest personalities he had ever met; and when we remember with what passion of love George Eliot paints the character of the village Methodist preacher, Dinah Morris; and when we remember how skeptical England and America honors and reveres William Booth, the impression becomes very strong that all these unbelievers might have been saved to the work and Church of Christ had a Christianity of the dead-in-earnest type of Gordon and Dinah Morris and Booth held the Anglo-Saxon world instead of the conventional type that has chiefly prevailed. It was Thomas H. Huxley who remarked, somewhat bitterly, that "clever men are as common as blackberries; the rare thing is to find a good one." Yet, how many of us are there in Church circles

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who do not hail with acclaim the advent on our denominational stage of an exceptionally clever man, while the man who is genuinely good, but not clever, is less than a cipher in standing and influence?

In our humble judgment it has been the spiritual vacuum in the Church that has been responsible for our loss both of the scientifically-trained men and the masses of the poor, both of which classes have missed, though from different viewpoints, the matchless logic of holy, happy-hearted lives.

It was Henry Van Dyke who said, speaking of the Church in the cities: "It is a mistake to suppose that men and women want from the Church what they can get, and do get, anywhere else in the city—glitter and bustle and display and rivalry and superficial entertainment. They want something very different; and that something is religion; and religion means inward purity and peace and joy, the sense of God's nearness, the comfort of Christ's love, the strength that comes from spiritual food and fellowship. The peril of the city Church lies in the temptation to make itself an annex and an imitation rather than a refuge and a contrast. . . . Not a Sunday lecture-hall, a sacred concert-room, an ecclesiastical millinery-shop, a baptized social club, but a house of prayer—a place where divine truth seems clearer, human brotherhood dearer, and heaven a little nearer than anywhere else in the roaring town." ("Essays in Application," p. 175.)

Why should believers in the New Testament revelation be continually seeking an irreducible minimum of faith? Be continually alert to reduce the divine and supernatural to its lowest possible terms? Why approach

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the study of the Scriptures with the question, "How little can I find promised here?" Why not rather with the reverent query, "How much can I find promised?" We do not depreciate reverent criticism. We do depreciate and deprecate the widespread tendency to explain away the supernatural on some purely naturalistic basis. And we still more profoundly deprecate the disposition to reject whatever goes beyond the experience of the critic. In this fault—this fatal snare of interpreters—the most hide-bound conservative among Biblical students is often a worse offender than the extremest higher critic.

This attitude of irreducible minimums of faith was not the mood that made Paul a world-conquering apostle, or that girded Luther for his giant's task of constructive as well as destructive ecclesiastical statesmanship, or that wrought the marvels of the Wesleyan revival, or that is effecting the conquest of the Orient to-day in the name of a present, self-imparting, dynamic Christ. The men who accomplished these great victories were men who never lost their sense of wonder. They were continually expecting and rejoicing in Divine Providence and deliverances and girdings of fresh power and spiritual baptisms and marvelous answers to prayer. Nor were they visionary, and unable to cope with practical problems. Their achievements in brick and mortar and dollars stagger belief. Read over again the life stories of John G. Paton and Jacob Chamberlain and Hudson Taylor and William Taylor and James M. Thoburn, and a hundred other great missionaries of the cross, and note anew how full their lives were of the immanence and interpositions of God. And John Wesley's daily Journal is so full of all this as to make it almost childlike.

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If these men won their great victories by seeing and claiming great things from God in the Word, why not attempt to find them there for our needs and for those to whom we minister? Are we allowing an unbelieving clientele to shame us out of our inheritance as the sons of God? Are we trembling in the presence of a science falsely so called? A science that speaks truly enough in things which it has the instruments to investigate, but which is not a science when it attempts to utter these deeper things of the soul's relation to its God?

It is not an irreducible minimum of faith that we need, but an inexpressible maximum. A faith that asks largely that its joy may be full.

The young man who bought his ticket from Portland to San Francisco, and who munched cheese and crackers sparingly for his meals, only to discover as he neared the Golden Gate that his ticket called for three bountiful meals a day, is a fitting illustration of your Christian intent on paring faith to an irreducible minimum.

But if, in addition to living on short rations himself, he insists on imposing his starvation diet on others, his folly becomes his guilt.

Rather let us hear the word of the apostle saying: "All things are yours. Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, . . . or things present or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." "Wherefore eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Not a minimum, but a maximum of faith, we repeat, and the largest liberty in the declaring of that faith. That is a part of the freedom of the Christian. Suppose

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he does blunder in his interpretation of inner experiences. That is better than not having the experiences. The experience may be divine, while its interpretation is human and liable to misconception. But we can well afford to let our people blunder a little in interpretation, if only they preserve spiritual vitality. If any one gets bump-tious or rancorous he can be dealt with without interfering with the freedom of sincere and loving men and women. Paul did not suppress the ebullitions of the Corinthian Christians—he regulated them. We of to-day are so afraid of something indecorous or irregular that we suppress spontaneity and individuality of Christian experience, and wind up our people in the grave-clothes of a conventional Christianity. And thus drought and dearth come to pass in our Churches, and “come-outism” and fanaticism spring up without.

Few are the Anglican leaders to-day who do not regret the narrow policy that lost the Wesleys and their converts to the Church of England. That regret has been voiced by the late Archdeacon Farrar and many other noted churchmen. The Wesleyan bodies of Great Britain have long regretted that an inflexible mode of worship and preaching made it impossible to hold the Booths and the socio-religious Salvation Army movement. It was a great honor the Wesleys lost, and a great revivification they missed, when the Army passed out into an independent movement.

We evangelical Churches of America are in danger of a similar blunder in pushing from us the holiness people who are going off in such numbers into the various separatist societies. While some of them are censorious and ill-balanced, many are pure and loving in their lives,

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and nearly all, by sympathetic administration, could be held to our Churches. Whatever may be our view of the doctrinal issue involved, our Churches ought to be large enough to admit diversities of view and genuineness of fellowship. Twenty-five years of observation compel the view that we need these people and they need us. And we can not avoid the conviction that an attitude of repression and harsh criticism tends to destroy not only the Christian "liberty of prophesying," but tends to shut us up in a mechanical and undeveloping type of religious organization. It must never be forgotten by the people called Methodists, and is worthy of pondering by all, that John Wesley distinctly encouraged the holiness teaching and testimonies which we complain of, and declared in his later life that it was the sort of teaching God had always blessed to the good of his societies. No one can have a comprehensive and interior view of the early development of Methodism without taking into consideration the place which this teaching and testimony had in the affections and thinking of Mr. Wesley and his followers.

We ought to hold these people to our Churches. We need their fire and zeal. They need our sense of proportion, perhaps, or at least the steadying and educational influence of the long-established Churches, together with the world-vision and program which a small and new organization can not in the nature of the case have. And both they and we need to lay more to heart the prayer of Jesus for a united Church.

It is beyond question that a warmer, more Scriptural, and more vital religious life in the Churches would prevent many of these people, whose hearts are right, even

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if their heads be sometimes awry, from swinging off into fanatical "churchettes" and short-lived missions. And the renaissance of the Experimental Note in our Churches will do it. At the English Wesleyan Conference of 1910, the president, Rev. John Hornabrook, spoke as follows:

"A revival amongst us of the doctrines of the Spirit, no one can doubt, would lead to a deepening of the spiritual life throughout the entire Church. It would do much to bring back the exuberant gladness, the moral glow, the radiant hopefulness of Christian experience, for it would once again lead to the realization on a large scale of the blessing of Christian assurance. It would also bring into prominence the doctrine of Spiritual Holiness, and lead to the eager pursuit and personal realization of it on the part of many.

"I know that this high state of grace has been sometimes crudely presented, and men have been alienated from it by perversions and exaggerations which have no foundation in the Word of God. We can not, however, get away from the fact that the Christian ideal, as set before us in the New Testament, is a very lofty one, and if it be true, as a recent writer in a secular paper says, 'that Holiness is a word we seldom use nowadays, and that ordinary men and women, if they think of the quality at all, think of it coldly as of something shining far off in a celestial haze,' the sooner we bring it down to earth again the better. 'For,' as the writer goes on to say, 'in the New Testament, perhaps from cover to cover, the most warm-hearted and least academic book that was ever written, "holiness" is used to express the aid of Christian teaching in regard to the individual. But the word has lost its vitality, and its essential beauty has

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become somewhat chill and austere. Some redefinition of it will have to be generally accepted before it can be revived in connection with living personalities.'

"That is well put, but I think you will bear me out when I say that, for Methodism, the redefinition of it is not necessary. We may need a restatement of it in terms of actual experience and modern life, but the thing itself as a grace of the Holy Spirit can not well be better defined than in the language of John Wesley. Let us get back to his teaching, placing the emphasis on those great truths to which he bore unflinching testimony, and the doctrine will reassert itself in the daily round and in the common task in the consecrated lives of thousands and tens of thousands who shall be 'vessels unto honor, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.' Let Charles Wesley once again interpret for us the deep things of God, and express for us our yearning desire:

"O come and dwell in me,
Spirit of power within,
And bring the glorious liberty
From sorrow, fear and sin!

"The seed of sin's disease,
Spirit of health remove,
Spirit of finished holiness,
Spirit of perfect love."

"If once we can reach that high standard as preachers and people, and to nothing less are we every one of us called, we shall be clothed with a might which is invincible. The Church will once more go forth conquering and to conquer. In the language of the New Testament,

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'the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' "

We heartily agree, therefore, with what the editor of the *Methodist Recorder*, of London, writes concerning the words we have quoted:

"The words of the president concerning holiness should be pondered. We speak the strict truth when we say that the early Methodists recovered for the Church the doctrine of Christian perfection. They did more. Many of them illustrated it by their beautiful lives. Those who have lived, in thought, in the time of the Great Revival, and have come into the presence of the best men and women who worshiped and worked in those great days, will assent to the assertion that Methodism, at the moment of its greatest intensity, produced a type of saintliness that was singularly attractive by reason of its quiet and celestial loveliness. The biographies of the men and women of whom we are thinking somewhat obscure their character. If we could have their memoirs rewritten by men who, in addition to possessing a kindred spirit, also have literary skill and taste, and know the path that leads not only to the mount, but also to the multitude, we should soon have a Methodist 'Book of Saints.' In modern times the doctrine of holiness has suffered at the hands of its expositors. Worst of all, it has been made a battle-flag, which has fluttered in contests that have broken the unity of the Church. Has the day come for saner teaching on this subject? We have no hope of any Church that does not possess an inspiring doctrine of holiness. The word 'saints' was supposed to be descriptive of the members of the primitive Church. The modern expositor informs us that the word did not mean

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much in its first application. He may be right. But a deeper meaning is now found in it. It makes us think of St. Jude's phrase, 'Kept for Jesus Christ.' That sentence should be inscribed on the badge of every Methodist. We must aim at real, practical, common-sense saintship, that reveals itself in a life spent in the service of God and man."

The Cologne Cathedral was halted in its erection by the death of the architect and the loss of his plan. No architect seemed able to grasp the complex greatness of the structure sufficiently to carry it to completion. So there it stood for centuries, an unfinished pile of stone and marble, pathetic in its aspiring incompleteness. But the lost plan was recovered. And with joy the work of completion was undertaken and carried forward until the forest of spires stood silhouetted against the sky and the last statue had found its destined niche—a majestic poem in marble. We are being created an habitation of God through the Eternal Spirit. But why does the building halt? Why rise not the lofty towers and soaring spires? Have we lost the plan—the key to the goodly harmony? The love of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, the personal possession of every believer—this is the key to the plan by which the universal Church of Jesus groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.

CHAPTER XIV

Religion By Inheritance

"Life is spent in learning the meaning of great words, so that some idle proverb known for years and accepted, perhaps, as a truism, comes home on a day like a blow."

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AS YEARS pass, large numbers come into the Church by natural birth instead of by new birth. When this means the unfolding of a life in the atmosphere of God and its response to God from its earliest consciousness, nothing is more beautiful. It comforts every Christian sensibility of the parent heart. And it is the ideal mode of induction into the Christian life.

But where it means the acceptance of the father's pew rather than the father's Savior, it becomes a peril. And the pastor of wide experience knows that this is true of a large number of Church members in the older congregations of our land. These people of the second or third generation have adopted the family religious tradition without adopting the spiritual and moral principles for which the Church stands. But because they are the sons of their fathers, and often men of wealth and influence in the community, they are eagerly sought as office-bearers in the Church. And thus they become factors of large influence in determining the policy of the Church, when they themselves are out of sympathy with the ideals for which the Church stands.

Back in early New England they met the problem of the relation of this class to the Church by a Half-way Covenant, which admitted unrenewed people to baptism and the Lord's table. But it was found so injurious to

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the morals of the Church as that under the lead of Jonathan Edwards it was banished from most of the Churches of Congregationalism—though not until Edwards, the greatest and noblest figure in that century of American Church life, had been sent into practical exile.

In our own day the presence of a large mass of irreligious people in its membership not only gives occasion for the enemies of the cross to blaspheme, but weakens the Church's effectiveness and renders impossible the exercise of discipline. For example, in a prominent Church with which the writer is familiar, and which contains many people of rare excellence, two of its prominent officials were given to periodical "sprees;" two were accustomed frankly to express their disbelief in the virgin birth of Jesus and in any supernatural quality in the Scriptures. It was not that they occupied the higher critics' position: they were avowed disbelievers in the Scriptures as containing any more authoritative teachings than the writings of any good men to-day. While still a fifth leader in this congregation was living in immorality, covering many years, known to his wife, to many of his associates, and a matter of common jest among the clubs of the city where this man was prominent. All these men were Christians by inheritance: men who had grown up in the Church without conversion.

We do not cite this case to fault the congregation where they belonged. It will average well with Churches in general. We cite it to show the danger that lurks in Church membership by inheritance. To open the way for unregenerate children of Christian parents to come into the Church, and to make it possible for them to remain there with an easy conscience, the Church is be-

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sought to drop its standards of moral requirement lower and yet lower. And much of the demand is from those in high places, whose very social position is the reason for their children being placed under special stress of temptation.

Among the people called Methodists the standard of membership requirement was first lowered when attendance on class-meetings as a test of membership was eliminated; and next, when the attitude of the Church toward amusements was relaxed; and again when the six months' probation was abolished; and there are those among us who urge that our ban on social wine-drinking should be the next to go. Not but that the rank and file of the people are as resolutely opposed to wine-drinking as ever; but some of the most influential men in her lay leadership are weakening at this point and are giving their sanction to social wine-drinking and their acquiescence to the liquor traffic. A study of the personnel of these men reveals the fact that they, too, are Christians by inheritance; men who make no profession of having ever passed through the spiritual crisis called the new birth, or of being in possession of any redemptional equivalent, such as "hostility toward sin with despair of self-rescue; personal venture of moral faith; clinging to Christ alone for salvation, and the dominating purpose to serve Christ in self-sacrificing loyalty."

This statement of a "redemptional equivalent" for conscious conversion is from the gifted pen of Dr. Olin A. Curtis, of Drew Theological Seminary.¹ In the same address from which this is taken appears so clear a putting of what we mean by religion by inheritance that we

¹Matriculation Day Address, 1910.

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reproduce it here: "There exists something which often is regarded as submission to Christ, and yet there is involved no personal quality. Really the bearing amounts to nothing more than *mechanical acquiescence*; for the yielding individual merely takes our Lord for granted as a conventional point of supremacy in the religious life. In home, Church, country, a man finds a certain estimate of Jesus acknowledged, and this estimate the man accepts as impersonally as a dolphin does the ocean. Indeed, it is possible to accept the entire Christian creed by this mechanical acquiescence. In one of his books Leslie Stephens says, 'When I ceased to accept the teachings of my youth it was not so much a process of giving up beliefs as of discovering that I had never really believed.' . . . It is not true that an initial mechanical attitude, however mechanical, may not be of *some* worth. It is natural, and wisely so, to give serious heed to the opinions of parents, teachers, friends, and all good men. . . . What I insist upon is that an initial mechanical attitude, even at its best, is but a providential advantage in the pedagogical opportunity; and that the initial attitude must be vitalized by personal attention, must be claimed, self-appropriated, if you please. . . . No, it is not enough to take Jesus Christ for granted: it is not enough to live, as one has strikingly said, 'in the suburbs of Christianity'—we must live purposely in Christ—we must, by full, self-conscious intention, lay hold of our total manhood and give it for life, death, and eternity in utter submission to Jesus Christ."

In another connection we have quoted some words from the most eminent of living Church historians, Professor Adolf Harnack, Let us repeat them here with

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their context, as they bear exactly on the subject of religion by inheritance:¹ "When the second and third generation after the founding of a new religion have passed away; when hundreds, nay thousands, have become its adherents, no longer through conversion, but by the influence of tradition and birth, despite Tertullian's saying, '*Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani*;' when those who have laid hold of the faith as great spoil are joined by crowds of others who wrap it around them like an outer garment, a revolution always occurs. The religion of strong feeling and the heart passes into the religion of custom and, therefore, of form and of law. . . . The process of solidifying and codifying the religion is bound to follow. Its forms stiffen and new forms are added. . . . Real religion becomes a closed book. Its most important element has evaporated."

In three large cities of the country—Baltimore, Louisville, and Kansas City—the writer has sought to secure the opinion of representative non-churchmen toward the Churches. Several hundred letters were addressed to men of various walks in life, the business and professional element predominating. The replies were often full, and usually bore evidences of frankness and cordiality. Almost without exception the general attitude toward the Church was friendly. Yet through most of the letters ran the strain that the Church was not taking its mission seriously—that it was weak, very weak, at the point of character-building; that the life of the people belonging to the Church did not differ materially in conduct and discernible motives from those outside the Church.

After making every deduction that may reasonably be

¹ "What is Christianity," page 212.

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made for lack of information and lack of sympathy, a large residuum of fact remains in these criticisms, and we churchmen can not afford to ignore it.

The late E. L. Godkin, long editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*, one of the keenest observers and most trenchant writers our generation has produced, and in sympathy with every good work, said in an essay on "The Church and Good Conduct:"

"The practice of the Church will have to be forced up to its own theory of its character and mission, which would involve serious collision with some of the most deeply rooted habits and ideas of modern social and political life. That there is any immediate probability of this we do not believe. Until it is brought about, members must make up their minds to have their religious professions treated by some as but slight guarantees of character, and by others as but cloaks for wrong-doing, hard as this may be for that large majority to whom they are an honest expression of sure hopes and noble aims. . . . The Church has been making a gallant fight to provide accommodations for the successful, and enable them *to be good Christians without sacrificing any of the good things of life, and, in fact, without favoring the outside public with any recognizable proof of their sincerity.*" (The italics are ours.)

Dr. A. A. Berle, in an article in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for July, 1903, says:

"The contrast between the theory of the Church and the actual life of the Church is marked, impressive, and uncomfortable. It is the contrast that nullifies the undoubtedly Biblical, faithful, and sound teaching of many pulpits. *It is this failure to provide the working model*

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which makes all our appeals of none effect, and more than all creates the atmosphere alien to the growth of religion. The distressing and unquestionable fact is that many of the Church people are not religious people. And many Churches are not properly Churches, but Sunday audiences which, in general character and respectability, are somewhat above the average, but governed by essentially the same ideals and ready to enforce about the same standards that are applied to the theater, the concert, and the lecture platform. If the services give pleasure and are enjoyable, all is well. If they become too severe either intellectually or in moral demand, or too uncomfortable in their searchingness, the average Church member holds that it is his inalienable right to go where more satisfactory conditions prevail. That this has its effect upon the vast body of the Protestant clergy, who are dependent upon the good-will of the congregation for support, is beyond denial. And it is this fact which has brought about the religious and moral decline, which has now reached the secondary stage of crass ignorance, on the part of a large body of the constituency of the Christian Church, concerning the Bible, Christian doctrine, and in fact all that makes for a distinctive religious, as contrasted with a worldly, life. To hope that this situation can be remedied by better instruction in the Bible, even by the most enlightened methods, is in our judgment a great error. To suppose that it is a question entirely of theological view is equally foolish. Where there is a genuinely sacrificial life enacting in the full view of mankind, nobody cares whether it is governed by a broad, a liberal, or a conservative theology. Few people care to know whether the man thus illustrating his religion is of one

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denomination or another. Not many are disturbed even if he has numberless personal eccentricities, if these are seen to have no bearing on the main question. *It is the union of teaching and life that tells the story and that persuades. It is teaching by example which, after all, is the most effective teaching known to man."*

CHAPTER XV

Persisting Tendency in Christianity
to Revert to Judaism

"I could find no trace of a society for converting the English people from Judaism to Christianity." (Herbert Spencer, "Studies in Sociology.")

"Jesus brought into view the religion of the heart, and presented to the faith of man an ideal so plain that it could dispense with the aid of representation by symbol and ceremony, and find its legitimate and necessary fruit in a pure and ever purer form of the common life of man." (Dr. William Mackintosh, "The Natural History of the Christian Religion," p. 177.)

"Jesus founded the eternal religion of humanity—the religion of the soul, stripped of everything sacerdotal, of creed, of external ceremonies, accessible to every race, superior to all castes—in a word, absolute. . . . The victory of Christianity was secured only when it broke completely its Jewish shell—a creation released from the narrow trammels of the Semitic mind. . . . The Semitic genius is essentially hard and dry." (Ernest Renan, on assuming Chair of Semitic Languages in the College of France.)

"Primitive Christianity did not last. In what followed that first stage, we have the greatest perversion of history. The new was conquered by the old. The pure stream, leaping from the utmost heights, fell into the sluggish river below, to take its color and follow its course. . . . As a result of the compromise we have in the following centuries a Christianity which is an amalgam of the teachings and life of Jesus with the priestism and clericalism with which Judaism and heathenism had combined to endow it." (Jonathan Brierly.)

PERSISTING TENDENCY IN CHRISTIANITY TO REVERT TO JUDAISM

WHEREVER Christianity attempts to reach the soul through visible symbols rather than by language; wherever the emphasis is on outward forms rather than the inner spirit of worship; wherever the ordinances are exalted as themselves communicating grace; wherever the places and instruments of grace are invested with mystic sacredness; wherever there is recourse to a priestly mediatorship as alone fully initiated into sacred mysteries; wherever there is the exaltation of tradition above the written Word—there you have a reversion to Judaism.

It is surprising but true that every organized form of Christianity has shown a persisting tendency to revert from essential Christianity to essential Judaism; from a Spirit-filled life to a law-filled life; from a religion of ethical qualities wrought into character by the divine indwelling to a religion of salvation through magical powers inhering in ordinances; from a religion of spirit to that of outward forms.

The contest between these two developments of religion is really older than Christianity, for it was waged from generation to generation by the prophets on one side and priests on the other. But it was Jesus who brought the utter opposition of the two into such vivid

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and startling contrast. This He did both by His teachings—"The hour cometh when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father . . . the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth"—and by His life of constant conflict with the Jewish hierarchy.

It is doubtless true that in the years before the development of Gentile Christianity began, many of the old Jewish modes of worship continued in connection with Christian services. And Paul found it necessary to protect the Gentile Churches from a Judaized form of Christianity, and even to sharply call back Galatian Christians from letting Christianity sink into a Jewish cult. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Now, after ye have known God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements? Ye observe days and months and times and years." But the apostolic Church shook itself free from the Jewish chrysalis and grew its own simple forms of service suited to both develop and express the free life of the Spirit. Not through priestly mediators but straight to the Father these early Christians prayed, in the name of the one Mediator, Jesus. Not through symbolic appeal to the eye, but by lifting the soul into direct communion with God through the Eternal Spirit. Not in one only holy place, but in private homes and in sail lofts and on sea shores, and wherever men could be gathered together did they worship Christ their risen King. Not on a sacrifice constantly being offered anew by priests did they place their hope, but on the sacrifice of the Lamb of God offered once for all.

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And as a result of this spirituality and simplicity and freedom, Christianity spread by leaps and bounds until it had conquered the whole Roman Empire.

But the law of inertia operates in the spiritual as in the physical world. It is easier to go through forms than to attain to the spirit. And the tendency was ever present to move in the direction of least resistance. Moreover, ecclesiastical ambition entered. By accepting a formal espousal of Christ, multitudes could be quickly enrolled in the Church whom it would take years to win by the Christ method of teaching and Spirit baptism. Then the ever-present desire to have the external benefits of a movement without submitting to its inner principles and control—that, too, operated to substitute a formal for a real Christianity. Ecclesiastical ambition found it far easier to control a Church built after the Jewish pattern, with its priestly mediatorship, than one constructed on the Christian plan of the individual's access to God for himself, and the Spirit's witness to that individual of his acceptance with God. Hence the Judaistic cult in Christendom grew apace.

With what result? With the result that within four centuries after Pentecost, Judaism had practically conquered the cross, and Greek and Roman Catholicism had emerged.

The Reformation was a heroic attempt to de-Judaize the Church and make it truly Christian. And in large measure it succeeded. There was a real renaissance of apostolic Christianity.

But the mistake we Protestants make is in thinking that it was the evils of Roman Catholicism we were fighting against, when in reality it is the evils of the human

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heart that reappear over and over again under like conditions. We make the mistake of thinking that the Reformation was wrought once for all, when the truth is, the conditions needing reforming are ever reasserting themselves, so that the Reformation has to be a continuous process. That is to say, the tendency to formalism and display and ecclesiastical ambition has to be continually renounced and overcome by fresh inflows of the Spirit of life.

Some Churches have suffered more than others from this persistence of the Judaistic impulse. The Church of England never freed itself as fully as the other Reformed Churches, probably because the Reformation in England was so largely a political movement. It came nearest to the original apostolic spirit in the generation immediately following the Wesleyan revival—which in practically every essential was a renaissance of apostolic Christianity, as it was also the carrying out to their logical completion of the principles of the Protestant Reformation. Yet as early as 1833 a movement was begun within the Anglican Church which has swung it back further into the Jewish shadow than at any period since the Reformation. We refer, of course, to the High Church or Ritualistic movement.

A distinguished and fair-minded scholar of this Church calls attention to the danger we have been considering, in these wise words: "The New Testament brought to light a religion of the Spirit; but human nature ever tends to become formal in its religion, and therefore has persistently striven, and still persistently strives, to turn every external function and office in a mechanical

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direction.”¹ As an illustration of this very point no better citation could be made than the rite of confirmation as practiced by the Church of England and various other ritualistic bodies, which is the lifeless successor of the laying on of hands by which the apostles communicated the Holy Spirit.

The point we would have our reader keep clearly in mind is the persisting tendency, in all these periods of the Church and in the various forms of its organization, of a formal and spectacular worship to replace the worship of God in spirit and in truth. “History repeats itself” because human nature is always repeating itself. And this law of reversion to a lower type, which is so constituent an element of the physical world, and which we have found to be so powerful an element in the moral and spiritual world, will continue. But it will not prevail and it will not increase its power if evangelical Christianity will reassert, strongly and constructively, those great principles of experimental religion which made the first century of the Church glorious and which have been the dynamic soul of every subsequent renaissance of pure Christianity. The renewed inflow of the Spirit of Life will bring that vital and vitalizing experience of the things of God which have been the heart of God’s Church in every age.

¹ Dr. G. T. Stokes, “Expositor’s Bible,” on Acts, Vol. I, pp. 388, 389.

CHAPTER XVI

How Churches Die and Rise Again

"In the history of religions every really important reformation is always, first and foremost, a *critical reduction* to principles; for, in the course of its historical development, religion, by adapting itself to circumstances, attracts to itself much alien matter, and produces, in conjunction with this, a number of hybrid and apocryphal elements, which it is compelled to place under the protection of what is sacred. If it is not to run wild from exuberance or be choked by its own dry leaves, the reformer must come who purifies it and brings it back to itself. This critical reduction Luther accomplished by victoriously declaring that the Christian religion was given only in the Word of God and in the inward experience which accords with that Word." (Adolf Harnack, "What is Christianity," p. 289.)

"The religious destiny of a generation has again and again, we discover, lain in what was going on in the depths of two or three elect and disciplined souls. How the fortunes of Anglicanism, we now see, were bound up in the thinkings, the discussions, the inward struggles of two or three young men in the Oriel common room in the thirties! Of what deeper significance for the religion of the Anglo-Saxon race were the spiritual communings of another young Oxford student—one John Wesley, at Lincoln College—a century before! What issues for Catholicism lay in the broodings of the young Spanish knight, Ignatius Loyola, as he lay, wounded by a cannon shot at Pampe-luna, beguiling the weary hours with a copy of 'The Lives of the Saints.'" (J. Brierly, in essay on "History's Secret Springs," p. 303.)

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CHURCHES die first at the heart. They die by losing sight of the ideals and principles that gave them birth. They die by becoming lustful of social position and secular power. They die by permitting a spiritual vacuum. They die when religion by inheritance displaces a religion of vital union with God. They die by reverting from the Christian to the Judaic type. They die by substituting ritual and liturgy, forms and ceremonies, for the spontaneous activities of the life of the Spirit. They die through the fastidiousness of a false culture. They die by burning incense to their own drag and net instead of to Him who created both drag and net and incense. They die by substituting the incidental and secondary for the primary and fundamental. They die by letting the speculative and intellectual and ornate in preaching displace the evangelistic and experimental. They die by suppressing the natural and spontaneous gladness of the soul in love with its Lord by a pompous and artificial religious ceremonialism.

If we were to take our New Testament down to the market and read First Corinthians or First Thessalonians to the Greek who sells us our fruit, he would greet our reading with a bovine stare. Yet he is a Christian, baptized and confirmed, and he is the descendant of the men to whom the apostle wrote those epistles.

Why the "bovine stare?" Because he knows nothing of the kind of Christianity these epistles talk about. The

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Christian Church Paul planted died out of Greece long ago. And it died out of Western Asia and Northern Africa. You say, "Yes, because the Mohammedans drove it out with fire and sword." True, but the Christianity of Christ died out first from the Churches, and only a wretched simulacrum of Christianity was left. No really Christian nation was ever permanently robbed of its religion. Those Churches of Western Asia and Northern Africa and Southern Europe were emasculated of vital Christianity. And when external danger came there was not moral power enough to gird those peoples with martial force to resist their foes.

Again and again have races passed "from hardihood to courage, from courage to conquest, from conquest to power, from power to wealth, from wealth to luxury and effeminacy, and from thence to the last stages in the melancholy drama-corruption, decline, and extinction."

The same decline has taken place in Churches—both local Churches and in the general Church. The early Christian Church grew rapidly and healthily. Persecution was a constant winnow of the unworthy. The likelihood of a blood-test kept the politician and hypocrite at a distance. But with the adoption of Christianity by Constantine came the time of real peril. The barrier raised by persecution was gone, and the world rushed in. The empire Christian, the Christian badge was a passport to place. And the unconverted mass all but swamped the Church.

A great ecclesiasticism meant, too, many official positions of power and honor. Ecclesiastical ambition became a master passion among the clergy. The passion for souls consumed the apostles. The passion for place consumed

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their successors ■ few generations on. The ultimate of this tendency was the papacy.

Thus spiritual power dwindled. But the demand for results in Church expansion did not dwindle. So pagan populations were received *en masse* into the Church by taking over their local pagan religious cults and baptizing the pagan cult with a Christian name; as, for example, the transfer of the worship of Diana of Ephesus to the Virgin Mary,¹ and of Achilles Pontarches to St. Phocas of Sinope, and of Poseidon to St. Nicholas of Myra. Thus image worship and a thousand other pagan ceremonials crept into the Church. Doctrinal corruption followed spiritual decline. Chrysostom is quoted by his biographer as saying of that period: "Christianity conquered the world, and was amazed, not at the vastness of the victory, but at the pettiness of the results attained. Everything was subjugated, yet nothing was changed."

The disappearance of vital religious experience, with its spontaneous expressions of devotion and worship and teaching, was followed by a showy ceremonialism, processionals and recessionals, and elaborate vestments—declared always to be an "enrichment of the public service," but recognized by the discerning as the infallible sign of spiritual death, as the springing up of toadstools is always the sign of death at their roots.

Such was the decline of the early Church and the rise of these perversions of Christianity which we know as Roman Catholicism and the Greek Church.

The Protestant Reformation was a divinely indwelt evolution out of these conditions.

Yet, how native to the human heart the corruptions are

¹See "Ramsey's Pauline Studies," page 131.

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which produced Romanism may be seen in the fact that Martin Luther, at the very height of his popularity and power as preacher and university lecturer in Wittenberg, astonished the people by suddenly leaving the city, advising his wife to sell their property there! Nor did he return until the elector of Saxony pleaded with him to do so. His reason for going was the "frivolity and fashion" of the people and their abandonment of the pure teachings of the Reformation. The popularity and renown of Luther had brought prosperity and wealth to Wittenberg and to Luther's congregation, and with them came the evils which had corrupted primitive Christianity. Goethe spoke of the State Church in Germany in his day as "giving barren morals without nourishment for heart and soul."

Over and over again this has taken place in the various State Churches of Europe. Christianity has created prosperity, wealth, and something of culture. Then enter luxury and frivolity. The disappearance of discipline follows, and the lowering of the moral standards of the Church; and then the corruption of doctrinal standards. And then, practically without exception, the multitudes come to have contempt for the Church and her clergy; vice becomes rampant; internal strife follows, and, often, the breaking up of States.

Nor can we of the free Churches claim immunity from like tendencies. There was not a corruption in the Church of the fourth and fifth centuries except the tendency to compromise with the idolatries of heathenism, which is not implicit in the Churches to-day—the Church of all denominations. The lust for power and place, the lust for numbers, the increasing tendency to substitute

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spectacular display of various kinds for the pure preached Word, the substitution of forms and ceremonies for a vital and vitalizing worship, the growing influence of money considerations in determining policies and measures: all these are germs infecting the visible Church and threatening its health and its very life to-day as in the fourth and fifth centuries. Not all Churches are infected to the same degree. And this is our rejoicing. But the peril is here. And in Church as in State "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Every Church is "a bundle of principles working out," as Taine said every man is.

It has been said that "no great step is ever taken in the intellectual or moral advance of the human family except by the sacrifice of at least one generation." This is true in the sense of the self-sacrifice involved in the establishment of new and advanced ideas. But it is also true of the sacrifice of one generation, at least, by the working out of errors. We learn obedience by the things that we suffer. And most men will learn deeply no other way.

How far is the absence of the emphasis on religious experience responsible for the languid grip of the Church on so many of its own young people? How far is it responsible for the Church's failure to preserve them from a saturnalia of self-indulgence that is evermore verging into vice? If these sons and daughters are given back to us by and by stained and broken, or never given back to us at all, to what extent is the Church's misplaced emphasis responsible? Must one generation perish before we will believe that fire burns, or that the breath of God is necessary to the soul's life?

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But history teaches that disintegrating and decaying Churches may be reborn. The Lutheran Reformation was a renaissance of original Christianity. And Puritanism was measurably such, though with more of the legal aspect than early Christianity had. And Methodism was distinctly a rebirth of apostolic Christianity in practically every phase of its life. As Dr. Nightingale, an Anglican clergyman, said in the *Contemporary Review* a few years since:

"Nearer than any order of Englishmen had ever done before, these old Methodist saints and martyrs fulfilled the idea the New Testament conveys of the Petrine and Pauline Church. Its virtues and its failings were manifested by them with equal luxuriance. They saw visions, they spoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, they counted all things dross except Christ's love. . . . They thought they had discovered the secret hidden from the ages, and would be able to reverse humanity's order and change the long-persistent ways of men."

And there have been countless rebirths of apostolic Christianity on a lesser or local scale.

What is the process?

First, a few earnest souls become possessed of a passionate desire for the rebirth of apostolic Christianity. Some long-neglected truth of fundamental importance takes hold on their thinking and feeling. They utter their message as "passionate men tormented with the truth." Their conviction spreads to other men. It meets the opposition that always comes from prejudice and from wounded ecclesiastical pride. But multitudes of hungry hearts open to the message, and the movement

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thrives, even under persecution. Then with success comes toleration from without, and the crystallization of teachings into creed, and modes of worship into fixed forms. And, as Dr. Alexander Maclaren has put it: "Truths which for many years had been left to burn unheeded, save by a faithful few watchers of the beacon, flame up all at once, the guiding pillars of a nation's march, and a whole people strike their tents and follow where they lead." In time the perils already referred to as arriving with the third or fourth generation of a religious movement will make their appearance. On the strength and purity of its interior life will depend the power of the Church to expel these perils, as microbes are expelled from a healthy human system.

"Must religion, then, always travel in a circle?" the reader asks. The answer is that in the long run progress is made. While these periods of reversion are matters of history—true of every religious movement, Jewish as well as Christian, of which there is record—yet, taking long periods into view, it is clear that there is advance. Christianity is a tide which has its periods of ebb as well as flow. The reassuring fact is that each recurring tide rises higher than any preceding tide—covers more of the world, if you please; and each recurring recession stops short of as low a level as the one which preceded it. This may not have a jubilant sound to those who think of the conquest of the world as a three months' campaign—a hurrah and a grand *coup d'état*. But to those of a scientific temper it seems reasonable and in harmony with the slow evolution, accompanied by partial reversions, which has been God's method everywhere in the physical universe. And to the writer it is a cause for superlative gladness

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and steadfast hope that in spite of all the reversions of Christianity it slowly gains and is ultimately to prevail.

But that is not an excuse to us for dilettante religionism. While Christianity, in the long run, gains, and must prevail, yet we and our generation may become castaways. Our work may be burned. Our local Church or our entire denomination may die, if we are not true to the great Original. Our little type, if it fails to realize the divine thought, may perish, as many types of Christianity have to all effects perished. Nature is full of analogies.

“From scarpèd cliff and quarried stone
She cries: A thousand types are gone;
I care for nothing: all shall go.”

All our denominational types shall go that do not correspond to the great Archetype, Christ Jesus. When King Saul failed God, He reached out into the obscure hills and picked a shepherd lad who fulfilled His plan. God has other Davids in training in obscurity to take the place of Sauls grown pompous and heedless of their call.

Dr. Alexander Maclaren, the prince of expository preachers for the generation closing, puts his finger on the key to the situation when he says that “the beginning of the Church’s awakening is her earnest cry to God.” The passionate, pleading cry for better things must go up from the men who know God. Dr. Maclaren has just been analyzing present-day conditions:¹ “I speak to you brethren who are in some sort representatives of our Churches throughout the land, and you can tell whether my words are on the whole true or overstrained. We who labor in our great cities, what say we? If one of

¹Sermon before Baptist Missionary Society.

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the number may speak for the rest, we have to acknowledge that commercial prosperity and business cares, the eagerness after pleasure and the exigencies of political strife, diffused doubt and widespread artistic and literary culture, are eating the very life out of thousands in our Churches and lowering their fervor till, like molten iron cooling in the air, what was once all glowing with ruddy heat is crusted over with foul black scoriæ ever encroaching on the tiny central warmth. You from our rural Churches, what say you? Have you not to speak of deepening torpor settling down on quiet corners, of the passing away of gray heads leaving no successors, of growing difficulties and lessened power to meet them, that make you sometimes all but despair?

"I am not flinging indiscriminate censures. I am not flinging censures at all. But I am giving voice to the confessions of many hearts, that our consciousness of our blame may be deepened and we may hasten back to that dear Lord whom we have left to serve alone, as His first disciples left Him once to agonize alone under the gnarled olives in Gethsemane, while they lay sleeping in the moonlight. . . . It is with us as with infants, the first sign of whose awaking is a cry. So when we dimly perceive how torpid we have been, and start to find that we have lost our Father's hand, the first instinct of that waking, which must needs be partly painful, is to call to Him. . . .

"Nor is Zion's cry to God only the beginning and sign of all true awakening: it is also the condition and indispensable precursor of all perfecting of recovery from spiritual languor. God's power flows into our weakness in the measure and on condition of our desires. . . .

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Then, brethren, let us lift our voices and our hearts. That which ascends as prayer descends as blessing, like the vapor that is drawn up by the kiss of the sun to fall in freshening rain. 'Call upon Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and hidden things which thou knowest not.' "

The eagle, according to ancient legend, renewed its youth by rising to gaze with undimmed eye on the sun, and then descending to plunge in a fountain of living water. So the Church, when it has gazed on the blazing, imperishable ideal of the New Testament Church, may renew its youth in the fountain of perpetual personal and intercessory prayer.

Then let the tens of thousands of devoted men and women, whose windows are ever open to the heavenly Jerusalem, pray as they have never prayed before. Let their voices "rise like a fountain night and day both for themselves" and for the great Church which is the one hope of a prodigal world. So shall the Church that seemed ready to die without doubt rise again.

CHAPTER XVII

The Paralysis of Pessimism

“The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.

But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.”

(Matthew Arnold in “Dover Beach.”)

“A singer sang a song of tears,
And the great world heard and wept
For the song of the sorrows of fleeting years,
And the hopes which the dead past kept;
And souls in anguish their burdens bore,
And the world was sadder than ever before.

“A singer sang a song of cheer,
And the world listened and smiled,
For he sang of the love of a Father dear
And the trust of a little child;
And souls that before had forgotten to pray,
Looked up and went singing along the way.”

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It was said of the Duke of Wellington: "He states every difficulty before he undertakes any task or service, but none after he has undertaken it."

To state the difficulties in the way is not pessimism. It is wisdom to admit the fact of the giants and walled cities if we add, with Caleb and Joshua: "We are well able to overcome it. Let us go up at once and possess it."

But a vision that sees only the high walls and giants means pessimism that brings paralysis. To believe that we are face to face with an insurmountable situation is to rob one's self and one's associates of all courage. A man who believes himself whipped is whipped.

An optimistic attitude, if justified by the facts, is a tremendous asset. It is courteous; and well-bred people always like courtesy. It is constructive. And that censorious criticism never is. Healthy people do not live by negations. It is the things they eat and do that makes blood and muscle—not the things they do not eat and do not do. It is inspiring. And pessimism is not inspiring.

Moreover, the man who undertakes to estimate critically—that is to say, discriminately—large masses of men and movement, and long periods of time, has undertaken a difficult task. It is easy to overestimate the defects of the present. It is equally easy to idealize the achieve-

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ments of the remote past. The man who undertakes to characterize the Church of the past and the Church of to-day must have historical imagination and the artist's sense of perspective, as well as a knowledge of facts.

This is why much criticism of the Church to-day is valueless. It has only a hint of information concerning the Church's past. Its induction of the Church's present is from a narrow range of facts. It has but a superficial knowledge of the complexity and vastness of the human soul. And it has no sense of proportion. The "blaze of ■ tar-barrel is the conflagration of a world."

Still further, it must be remembered that God is not confined to historical modes of work. "Ancient good" may not indeed become "uncouth," but ancient modes may. God's abounding vitality will keep growing new methods just as sap grows new rings on trees. The writer avows a habit of scanning the horizon daily with his field-glass to see every fresh token of God's working, and accounts every such token a personal favor from the Almighty.

There are two classes of pessimists in the Church. One class is the pessimists of the backward look, and the other the pessimists of the forward look.

The pessimists of the backward look live in the past. Old times are the happy times. The old way of doing things is for them the end of all controversy. The past is idealized. The prosaic and perhaps irritating present is continually minimized and discounted. It is the Chinese attitude—a species of ancestral worship. The virtues of the olden days are magnified out of all proportion, and its defects forgotten. It is an unscientific attitude and it is an un-Christian attitude. Unscientific because

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it ignores the facts, and un-Christian because it bears false witness against its neighbor. Its reign paralyzes effort.

The pessimists of the forward look have a theory that the world must wax worse and worse until the acme of evil is reached, and then Christ will come again and set up His real Kingdom. Hence, the blacker the present sky, the nearer and surer the dawn. With a genuine and beautiful devotion to Jesus is combined a theory of His method of evangelizing the world which robs Him of many of His most significant triumphs, and stigmatizes the present dispensation of the Holy Spirit as a makeshift and failure. It ignores the process of the progressive development of spiritual life in the world—progressive, even though at times retarded by reversions and counter eddies. And in place of that orderly, progressive development, the analogy of which is seen everywhere in the physical universe, it substitutes a progress by cataclysms, and expects the final triumph through the setting up of a visible kingdom of Christ in the world, with the visible Christ as King, thus affirming and establishing the very policy and program which Jesus distinctly repudiated when He came to the world to redeem it by His death.

The effect of both of these forms of pessimism is paralysis. Even though to the latter of these types is to be credited an aggressive missionary propaganda, yet the superficial methods of that propaganda and the general attitude of that cult of Christian thought toward the great Christian and reform movements that are slowly but surely transforming society are such as to justify the term paralysis as the final outcome.

Of the ultimate result of the program of Christianity there can be no doubt. We follow the conquering Christ.

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His ideals ultimately will inform and His spirit permeate the laws and institutions and customs of humanity. It is the "far-off, divine event to which the whole creation moves." "He shall reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet; then shall He deliver the Kingdom unto His Father." This outcome is foreshadowed in all nature, where the method of its achievement has been writ large and clear. Its gradual but progressing movement is traceable in all history. It is the goal of all prophecy and the confident expectation of all who believe that Christ was the wisdom of God and the power of God.

While our own generation is far from being Christian, and while the Church of to-day, as we have attempted to point out, presents phases of recession and reversion, yet the tokens of God's inworking and indwelling are many and reassuring. The way in which the gospel is gripping the men of our generation; the vast numbers of them who are being gathered for Scripture study in the Sunday schools; the leaping growth and strategic methods of the Young Men's Christian Associations; the awaking sense of obligation for the evangelizing of the world, with the tremendous strides being made in the spread of Christianity among pagan nations; the sale of over a million books on missions last year among the young people of the Churches; the turning back to faith of many scientific men, repelled and disappointed by the barren negations of a Christless philosophy; the at least incipient returning to faith of business and professional men, appalled by the orgies and bestialities of a materialistic civilization; the widespread insistence on the infiltration of the ethics and brotherhood spirit of Jesus into the social and political and commercial institutions and customs of the world—

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all these are joyful tokens of the wonder-working God among His people. He has not forgotten or deserted us, and we are wise if morning by morning we rise early to cast our telescope out toward the wide sky-line to discover what fresh signs of His wizard-working have appeared over night.

During the writer's first pastorate he had a conversation with a brilliant lawyer, one of the most eminent of the Central West, and found him religiously utterly at sea—he did not accept the Bible; he did not accept Jesus Christ as more than a good man. Christianity was only one of a hundred imperfect religions. And so on. A few years ago we learned that this man was at work in the Church and in behalf of Christian education in his State. We sought him out to learn the cause of this change. He replied almost in the words of George John Romanes, when that brilliant scholar renounced agnosticism and accepted Christ: "I found that it was Christianity or nothing. As I came more and more into contact with the world I saw that society would become utterly moribund without Christ; and while I am not a very good Christian, yet I am in the Church because I must align myself with the one force that has in it the hope of the world's renewal."

We believe this man represents a class—a large class—of highly-cultivated, scientifically-trained, brainy men, who for a time were swung away from Christianity by its seeming dissonance with modern science, but who are now swinging back to Christ because they see that He only has the healing for the world's deep moral hurt. As this lawyer expressed it, "Society becomes utterly moribund without Christ."

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That is a significant utterance of President David Starr Jordan, of Leland Stanford University, in *The Hibbert Journal*: "I have no patience with the sophomoric spirit which vaunts its own reason and throws into the ragbag everything that the fathers believed. We should not be as far on as we are to-day if the fathers had not believed very close to the truth. However far afield we may go in our young and callow days, most of us will be found revamping and appropriating the old beliefs of our fathers and mothers when we go to work in the world. *Eighty-five per cent of our students take up their old religious practices again when their real living finds expression.* A little bit of real living brings back the enthusiasm and the emotion; and no one can be faithful and true to worthy ideals without soon finding God displacing those ideals with himself."

Only two or three weeks since we fell in with a man of different type, a prominent and wealthy business man of a Western city. He said he was an agnostic; that for twenty or more years he had believed nothing. But a half hour's conversation showed that this man, immersed in commercial life, and with the exhilaration of his enterprises successfully carried out thrilling in his veins, was yet deep down in his heart hungry for God. Handsome, strong, in the prime of his days, there was yet in his deeper self, unrevealed even to his closest friends, a longing for "a something more, and more divine, that would rise nor be repressed." It was with him a harking back to the abandoned faith of his boyhood. We told him of Henry W. Grady, who, after coming to Atlanta, amid the whirlwind of success and popularity which came to him there, found he was losing his hold

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on God; and how at length his Atlanta acquaintances missed him; and how Grady was back at his boyhood home, wandering over the old place and recalling the early scenes and night by night praying at the knee of his mother, just as he did when he was a boy; and how he came back to the city with the old, sweet trust of his boyhood restored. It was one of the most precious hours of the writer's ministry to see the way in which this splendid business man drank this in, and to receive his promise that he would go back to the old Book and read it to his sons, and that he would begin again his attendance at the house of God.

Over and over we are seeing signs that our luxurious and materialistic generation is beginning to recoil from its saturnalia of sense, and that the hunger for the spiritual is reasserting itself. It has not been more forcefully and vividly expressed than by an organ of the commercial life *de luxe*, the *Wall Street Journal*, when it says:

"What America needs more than railway extension, and Western irrigation, and a low tariff, and a bigger wheat crop, and a merchant marine, and a new navy, is a revival of piety, the kind mother and father used to have—piety that counted it good business to stop for daily family prayer before breakfast, right in the middle of harvest, that quit field work a half hour early Thursday night so as to get the chores done and go to prayer-meeting; that borrowed money to pay the preacher's salary, and prayed fervently in secret for the salvation of the rich man who looked with scorn on such unbusiness-like behavior. That's what we need now to clean this country of the filth of graft, and of greed, petty and big;

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of worship of fine houses and big lands and high office and grand social functions. What is this thing we are worshiping but a vain repetition of what decayed nations fell down and worshiped just before their light went out? Read the history of Rome in decay, and you will find luxury there that could lay a big dollar over our little doughnut that looks so large to us. Great wealth never made a nation substantial or honorable. There is nothing on earth that looks good that is so dangerous for a man or a nation to handle as quick, easy, big money. If you do resist its deadly influence, the chances are that it will get your son. It takes greater and finer heroism to dare to be poor in America than to charge an earthworks in Manchuria."

An editorial in *The Century*, a magazine of high literary excellence, also strikes this note in the following words:

"Careful students of social tendencies report a reaction against the prevailing laxity in conduct and opinion. . . . This is sometimes characterized as a moral renaissance. It goes deeper. It is nothing else than a revival of religion. Yet it does not appear to be the result of any of the ordinary evangelistic efforts or agencies. It is springing up in unwonted places and is finding utterance by unprofessional and unfamiliar voices. Any one who has ears to hear must catch now and then in the common speech of men a new note of seriousness. The facts which have come to light in the last few years respecting the terrible infidelity and abuses of power in high places have touched the heart of the common man with a sense of solicitude. In days like these the airy optimism which can see no peril in the path of the nation

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is an impertinence. Sensible men are not ashamed to confess their fears, and in their study of existing conditions the truth is brought home to them that the remedy which is needed is a deepening of the life of the people—something organic and elemental which shall change the common currents of thought and feeling and renovate the springs of character. . . . Moral rules are not enough; what is needed is moral motive power—the love of righteousness, the impulse to integrity, the enthusiasm of virtue. And this, as even the common man is beginning to feel, is kindled only by religion—by fellowship and communion with that Power not ourselves which makes for righteousness. . . . There must be something to worship, something that kindles our purest love and marshals our highest loyalties. Nothing less than this will meet the social need of the time, which is a call for a radical change in ruling ideas, for a mighty reconstruction of ideals, for new conceptions of the meaning and value of life.”

But whether these signs represent a fundamental drift or are only fugitive and exceptional, yet is the triumph of Christ's Kingdom sure. For whatever recessions of the tide occur, the fundamental movement is onward, according both to history, taken in its sweep, and according to the more sure word of prophecy which can not fail. Pagan religions put their golden age in the past; but Christianity, with heart of hope and an unfading springtime in its breast, confidently and joyously anticipates its golden age in the coming years.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Contents of the Pentecostal
Chrism

"If I cease becoming better, I shall soon cease to be good."
(Found in Oliver Cromwell's Bible.)

"Christian character is hungry for the highest. If we reject this claim of the highest or feel it slightly, we shall soon let go the higher, then the high." (Robert E. Speer, "The Making of a Man," p. 150.)

"Perhaps our Christian life began with a great surrender; but whether it did or not, it is to consist of an experience of constant surrender to the highest." (Ibid, p. 163.)

"From dim Australia's distant strand,
From old South Afric's golden Rand,
From hoary Albion's storied land,
From all the hills of Wales;
Where sweeps the Hudson's silvery tide,
Where lifts the Rockies' lordly pride,
Where flows the far Pacific wide,
From mountains and from vales.
Hark! 'This is that,' by Joel spoken
To the nations lost.
'This is that,' His ancient token
Of His covenant unbroken,
This is Pentecost.

His Church arises, robed and young,
As when the first apostle's tongue,
With all its burning message flung,
The hosts at Jesus' feet.
As when Parthians and the Medes
And Jews devout and heathen creeds.
Found all their cravings, all their needs
Met in the Paraclete.
List! 'This is that,' the anthem swelling,
To the skies uptossed
By the ecstatic myriads telling
Of the Savior's deep indwelling,
This is Pentecost.

"Faith casts off fear, Joy leaps from gloom,
Once more we see that upper room
Where on each brow the mystic bloom
Blossomed into flame.
The Spirit breath our souls has stirred,
And hushed in rapture we have heard
The call of the incarnate Word,
And owned His sacred Name.
Lo! 'This is that.' God is creating
By the Holy Ghost
Light from darkness, Love from hating.
Heaven and Earth again are mating,
This is Pentecost." (Robert McIntyre.)

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IN our generation the reaction from unreality has been so prodigious as to swing us almost out of the orbit of the supernatural. Nowhere is this more marked than in the realm of religious experience. The extravagant claims and grotesque interpretations of preceding generations, coupled perhaps with other influences, have made most of the stronger men of our generation steer clear of the striking and marvelous in religious experience. Supernatural influence is, of course, recognized, but it is much the same manifestation of the supernatural as is seen in the operation of the known laws of nature—an immanent God working by discernible processes of cause and effect. Even conversion is analyzed into a series of broodings and mental explosions, ultimating in favorable changes of character.

We are not of those who believe God is barred out of a process as soon as it becomes rational. His presence is in His laws. If we understood all His ways or laws we should understand Him.

Yet the experience of a multitude of Christian workers indicates that there is a girding for service, a raising of the powers of the soul to a higher pitch, which can not be explained on any naturalistic basis. In the lives of thousands of Christians, such as Dwight L. Moody and William Taylor and Charles G. Finney and Jonathani Edwards and John Wesley, there has been a peculiar

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power over and above that traceable to natural endowments, since it did not exist in the earlier periods of their life, which made them almost irresistible in pleading with men to be reconciled to God. If it were animal magnetism or hypnotism, as some claim, then John Wesley and D. L. Moody ought to have been able to exercise as much influence over people in the earlier period of their public work as they did after certain marked experiences came to them. But both their own testimony and the record of their work show that such was not the case. Mr. Wesley was almost a failure for the first thirteen years of his ministry. His mission in America was a failure. It was not until that night in the Aldersgate Street Moravian meeting that he received the endowment that made him a mighty winner of souls. And while Mr. Moody's earlier work had been more successful, yet it was not until that remarkable experience came to him in New York City, when, though soliciting funds for the new Young Men's Christian Association building in Chicago, he was still more urgently importuning Heaven for a new spiritual equipment, which he ever afterward declared opened a new era of power in his ministry, that Mr. Moody became a puissant factor in the religious life of two continents.

J. O. Peck, one of the most effective preachers of the Methodist denomination, gave a similar testimony, which is so widely known as to not need quoting. While Horace Bushnell, from the standpoint of pure intellect perhaps the greatest preacher that America has produced, passed through a strikingly similar experience. On an early February morning Bushnell's wife awoke to hear that the light for which he had waited had come. She

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asked, "What have you seen?" He replied, "The gospel." He regarded this experience as a personal discovery of Christ and of God. He himself explained it: "I seemed to pass a boundary. I had never been very legal in my Christian life, but now I passed from these partial seeings, glimpses, doubts, into a closer knowledge of God and into His inspirations, which I have never wholly lost." (Munger's "Life of Bushnell.")

We disclaim any special pleading. We are interested only that we shall have a true record of the facts—this from a scientific viewpoint—and interested as a Christian that we shall not limit the power of God. The number of cases like those above cited, in which both ministers and laymen have come, usually after a period of deep exercise of soul, out of a moderate and even mediocre condition of usefulness and earnestness into a life of intensest activity and striking effectiveness, has been so large and so well authenticated as to make clear that the process is in harmony with the essential constitution of the human mind. And this, whether it harmonize with our own experience or not, ought to remove all prejudice against such experiences. Yes, further: it ought to make such experiences an object of strong desire and quest by those of us who have not arrived at them. Not that all experiences in divine things are to be identical. The understanding of Christian truth and privilege differs in different individuals, and the outcome and surrender to God and faith for salvation will therefore be so different as that these individuals will represent different stages of religious development at every hour of their careers. But with the great majority of Christians, and of ministers too, the consciousness of lack is so marked and the de-

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gree of effectiveness in service is so low as that we ought earnestly to seek this profounder endowment of power.

Especially is this conviction acute when we read the story of the early Church and its Pentecost, and the Pentecostal experiences of various groups and individuals as detailed afterward in the Book of Acts. All of them were alike in these respects: they were praying people, following God according to their lights. They became aware of a larger privilege of blessing and serviceableness. They submitted teachably to the process for its attainment. They received a great spiritual enlargement and endowment, accompanied by the sense of certainty in spiritual things and consciousness of filial relation to God. To an outsider the most striking effect was the freedom and power with which they bore testimony to spiritual things and performed various kinds of religious service. Temporary accompaniments of this anointing were miraculous gifts, such as "tongues," healings, etc. These last soon dropped out, leaving the moral and spiritual effects as the permanent elements of the Pentecostal chrism.

The Apostle Peter, tracing swiftly the analogy between the anointing of Cornelius and his company and the anointing of the one hundred and twenty at Pentecost, says their "hearts were purified by faith." Without attaching any technical or esoteric meaning to the term "purify," it evidently means a gracious and blessed condition of the moral nature, effecting harmony between it and God. Gladness, sustained buoyancy of spirit, courage to meet opposition, steady faith, and whole-hearted consecration to the work of God, accompanied by (or shall we say, eventuating in) remarkable persuasive power over others, were the contents of this Pentecostal

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chrism. Given an aseptic condition of soul, plus courage, and sustained faith and buoyancy of spirit, and passion for souls—is not *that*, itself, power? Will not such an interior life itself lend that peculiar personality that will win men? Everywhere we touch the Spirit's anointing in the New Testament we meet these effects. And who will say that they are not effects most passionately to be desired by us to-day?

If it be said that all these experiences were the experiences of Jews or proselytes to Judaism coming out of an old disappearing dispensation into the new normal development of religion called Christianity, and that we are not to expect any such stages of development among Christians to-day, we reply that this is a non-sequitur. We need expect no such development among Christians to-day if we find them already possessed of the graces of the Pentecostal chrism. But if not, what then? Because they bear the name of Christian, yet have only the religious development of first-century Jews, are they debarred the privileges of first-century Christians? If our religious life to-day is formal and legal and vacillating, and with little or no filial consciousness, and without freedom in service, must we remain so because we are Christians in faith instead of Jews?

There is a mathematical axiom that "things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other." This is as true in religion as in mathematics. And being true, it is an inescapable conclusion that the majority of professing Christians to-day are in the same moral and spiritual condition that the Jews were in Christ's day; that is, those Jews who, like the disciples, were learners in the school of Christ. There is the same partialness of

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faith, the same timidity in service, the same hesitancy about openly confessing Christ, the same vacillation of devotion, the same formality in worship, the same powerlessness in propaganda. Why not, then, expect the same spiritual anointing and equipment for service? Did Jesus utter His promise of the Spirit for the disciples' sake only, or for our sake also?

We have seen such gracious and beautiful effects of the Spirit's chrism on all kinds of people as to constitute the most winsome possible argument for it. To specify an instance or two: A minister in an Indiana Conference, whose work in and out of the pulpit on our earlier acquaintance with him was formal and fruitless to a degree. Under the teaching of Rev. Samuel A. Keen, D. D., then pastor of Roberts Park Church, Indianapolis, the minister referred to came to see his privilege of spiritual enlargement and received in a public service on the Acton Camp Grounds a great spiritual baptism. The whole tone of his ministry was changed. It became earnest, almost eager, in its quest of souls, and electric. There was a courage, a gentleness, a freedom, a sustained buoyancy of faith, and an effectiveness that had never been known before. He was a little past middle life. And when, a few years later, "sunset and evening star" came for him, there was not only no "moaning at the bar," but an eager expectancy of meeting his Pilot face to face that made his death-scene a transfiguration. We could cite a score of such cases among ministers.

Frances E. Willard tells of her own full surrender to God at Evanston, in a meeting conducted by Phoebe Palmer, and of the effect on her inner life: "I can not describe the deep welling up of joy that gradually pos-

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sessed me. I was utterly free from care. I was blithe as a bird that is good for nothing except to sing. I did not ask myself, 'Is this my duty?' but just intuitively knew what I was called upon to do. The conscious, emotional presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit held me. I ran about upon His errands 'just for love.' Life was a halcyon day. All my friends knew and noticed the change, and I would not like to write down the lovely things some of them said to me; but they did me no harm, for I was shut in with the Lord."*

On this testimony the *Michigan Christian Advocate* editorially remarks:

"It is probable that 'the deep welling up of joy' that thrilled Miss Willard's soul is the secret of her oneness of aim and strenuousness of purpose all through her after-life. She never had to inquire what duty was, but seemed to know it instinctively, and she lost no time in going about it. She not only always and ever was 'as blithe as a bird,' but her journeys from city to city, across the continent and over lakes and seas, were like the flights of strong-winged birds that know their habitations and instinctively seek the places of safety, life, and the fulfillment of nature's functions. O, it is joyous to 'run upon errands just for love!' Would that a thousand such souls were baptized for such a mission, and that they had already entered upon their 'halcyon life day!'"

Washington C. De Pauw, of New Albany, Indiana, whose name our university at Greencastle bears, was for years an official of Centenary Church without being spiritually active. In a meeting conducted by Mrs. Phoebe Palmer he received a great spiritual baptism. From that

* "Glimpses of Fifty Years," p. 626.

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time he threw all his powers into work for God. As the organizer and teacher of a great Bible class, as a personal soul winner, as an organizer of agencies for the extension of the Kingdom, he became the most potent lay leader in the Ohio Valley.

William and Catharine Booth went through like experience of consecration after having entered the ministry. General Booth gave the following testimony to Dr. Chapman:

"When I was in London," said Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman in a recent sermon, "I received word that if I was at the Salvation Army headquarters at ten o'clock sharp I might meet General Booth. I hurriedly made my way there, for he was to leave for the continent in a very few minutes.

"When I looked into his face and saw him brush back his hair from his brow, heard him speak of the trials and conflicts and the victories, I said, 'General Booth, you tell me what has been the secret of your success all the way through.'

"He hesitated a second, and then I saw the tears come into his eyes and steal down his cheeks, and then he said: 'I will tell you the secret: God has had all there was of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, men with greater opportunities; but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Jesus Christ could do with the poor of London, I made up my mind that God would have all of William Booth there was; and if there is anything of power in the Salvation Army to-day, it is because God has all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my will, and all the influence of my life.'"

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It is, however, in the private life of plain people that we have been privileged to observe the most beautiful and convincing proofs of the Pentecostal chrisim. Plain people, with none of the inspiration or motive of a public audience upon them, best reflect the true inwardness of religion.

Next to the influences of the writer's childhood home the most potent factor in leading him to Christ was his Sunday school teacher, Mrs. Ann H. Neff, wife of Andrew J. Neff, Esq., of Greencastle, Ind., and later of Kansas City, Mo., where her son became mayor, and several sons prominent in business and educational circles. Mrs. Neff knelt by our side when we sought Christ in conversion, and her influence exerted steadily and tenderly during the following formative years was of untold value. We were often in her home as one of her own boys, and we bear record that hers was one of the most poised and beautiful lives we have ever known. Intelligent, thoughtful, broad in sympathies, in touch with the best human things, and with it all a passion of devotion to Christ, a steady and beautiful sweetness of spirit, a love that poured itself out like a fountain night and day, and that was as a magnetic current to draw all that knew her both to her and to her Lord. And the secret of it all, she was wont to tell us in quiet hours, was the Pentecostal chrisim. Over the lapse of more than a quarter of a century, her life still weaves its witchery of sweet and Christlike compulsion upon us.

Another instance: A young married woman of thirty-two, an active Church worker in an Indiana village, came to feel her need of spiritual enlargement. Through reading the writings of Phoebe Palmer she was led to believe

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for the Pentecostal chrism. With it there came a great spiritual uplift—the freedom, the sustained buoyancy of faith, the victory over sin, the passion for souls, the aggressiveness and courage in pushing, by quiet, womanly ways, the work of the Kingdom—all these marks of the earliest Pentecostal chrism we saw reproduced in her. Afterwards came tests of that anointing. Her minister-husband died and left her in poverty and in broken health, with little children clinging to her, and older children unable, as yet, to lift much of the burden from her. How to hold together the children and provide for their clamorous wants; how to hold steady boisterous and pugnacious boys, breaking out in fresh eruptions of mischief every hour; how to train them in the knowledge and love of God; how to steer her course between groups of relatives and friends unfavorable to the educational ideals and plans she cherished for her children and retain the good-will of all those relatives and friends; and how, above all, to adorn the doctrine of her God and Savior before her children amid the multitudinous cares and annoyances of the home—that was the heavy responsibility of this widow. Yet those who saw were amazed at the strength and sweetness of her life. In her invalidism and poverty she did not charge God foolishly. The Lord had given, the Lord had taken away. With steady, strong will she guided the affairs of her household. There was no flabbiness or puttiness in the fiber. Yet through all the crucible hours that burned again and again about her there was the same sweetness and gentle firmness and unshaken repose. We used to miss her now and then, and would see that the door to her private room was locked. Presently she would emerge with a look on her

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face "such as the limners gave to the beloved disciple," the light that never was on land or sea. And in our dim, boyish fashion we comprehended the source of her strength.

"She told me, in the morning her white thought
Did beat to Godward, like a carrier-dove,
My name beneath its wing."

And a deep sense of God began to fill our mind. But it was in later years she told us the story of her Pentecostal chrism and the precious acquaintance with God it had introduced her to, and how the undergirding Arms had sustained her through all the years. When, years after she had proved to the uttermost by the swellings of Jordan the faithfulness of her Lord, we stood in Westminster Cathedral and read on a stone the lines,

"There are, in this loud-stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart
Midst dusky lane and wrangling mart,
And ply life's tasks with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat,"

we thought of her and how radiantly she had fulfilled the words. And as we write these lines, her grave, sweet eyes look down upon us from their pictured place upon the wall, and we whisper, "Thank God for a Christian mother!" and then repeat softly, with St. Augustine, "And such a mother!"

CHAPTER XIX

The Function of "Blessing" in
Moral Renewal

"There is another organ of knowledge than the dry light of pure intellect; and the truth attainable by this other organ of knowledge is objective and real, even though no appeal can be made to the theoretical reason in its defense. In this means of knowledge the intellect is not inactive, but is fused in organic unity with the conscience and affections of the believing soul. In order to know the things of Christ there must be purity of heart, the submission of the will, and what is known as the illumination of the Holy Spirit. The function of feeling is to furnish the middle terms between the knowing intellect and conscience." (Phillips Brooks, "Life," by Allen, III, p. 119.)

"We can not kindle when we will
The fire that in the heart resides;
The Spirit bloweth and is still;
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be through days of gloom fulfilled." (*Anon.*)

"Where the character, as something distinguished from the intellect, is concerned, the causes of human diversity lie chiefly in our differing susceptibilities of emotional excitement, and in the different impulses and inhibitions which these bring in their train.

"You see now why I have been so individualistic in these lectures, and why I have seemed so bent on rehabilitating the element of feeling in religion and subordinating its intellectual part. Individuality is founded in feeling and the recesses of feeling; the darker, blinder strata of character are the only places in the world in which we catch real fact in the making, and directly perceive how events happen, and how work is actually done." (William James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," pp. 261, 501)

THE FUNCTION OF "BLESSING" IN MORAL RENEWAL

THE phenomenon known as "blessing" has a definite function to fulfill in the conversion of a soul. This is the proposition we shall endeavor to prove by this chapter.

The phenomenon is a familiar one, though less so than a generation ago. A man seeks God's pardoning grace. He kneels in prayer, whether secretly or in public. He is conscious of himself as being, to use Professor James's phrase, "divided . . . inferior and unhappy." Presently under the impact of God's Spirit he arises "unified and consciously right, superior and happy." Old things have passed away; behold, they have become new! As the psalmist says, "They looked unto Him and were radiant."

Four things have emerged into the consciousness of this man as he prayed: unity, rightness with God, a sense of superiority (to his old self), and gladness. If you were to ask the man himself he would not be able to analyze his consciousness as Professor James has done, but would probably say, "I have been greatly blessed," or, "I feel like an entirely different man—I feel so light-hearted and happy." The writer has dealt with three thousand such cases in the twenty-five years he has spent in the pastorate, and speaks with confidence of the phenomena, since he has handled personally every one of these cases.

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In a word, whatever the mental development of the convert, and however he may express the inner change—whether like the German student who said, “I have passed out of diversity into unity,” or like the colored woman whose conversion almost broke up a camp-meeting service we attended in Illinois, because she showed a disposition to embrace every one in sight as she cried: “O, is dis here me? Is dis me?”—one thing is always prominent: a great gladness, a consciousness of blessing.

The length of time that this exalted state of the sensibilities continues varies greatly, for it depends on many different things, such as temperament, fidelity to the means of grace, and the like. In ordinary cases this sense of great blessing subsides in a few months, although the writer has met cases where it has continued for as long as two years. Mr. Reese Price, of Troy, N. Y., afterwards of Greencastle, Ind., a very intelligent man, told us that for two years after his conversion he could not hear any one talk of Christ, or himself bow in prayer, or read the Scriptures, without tears of gladness flowing. Nor was this gentleman by any means of an emotional temperament, but was what would be called popularly “a hard-headed business man.” That was a longer period than is common for the conscious, emotional blessing to abide. Yet it must not be understood that the blessing disappears entirely. On the contrary, the use of secret prayer and of the public means of grace brings it back again and again through all the remaining years of one’s life. It has been thirty years since the writer consciously found God and received the witness of his acceptance. Yet, as he writes these lines, the old gladness springs up like a fountain and overflows. This al-

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ways recurs when he hears any one tell of God's gracious work in his soul, or when he reads the accounts of the conversion as told by such men as Augustine in his "Confessions," or Charles G. Finney in his "Autobiography," or Dwight L. Moody or Frances Willard.

This is the common experience of Christians. The times of emotional blessing recur at intervals, longer or shorter according to one's fidelity to the means of grace and perhaps, also, one's temperament; although the latter has much less to do with it than many believe.

The argument of this chapter, however, is to prove that this tide of emotional blessing which comes at conversion abides long enough to accomplish two or three very important things.

First, *long enough to break up the old nerve-tracks and sensory currents and to form new channels, both in the brain and whole nervous system. The tide of deep spiritual emotion stays long enough to plow new furrows of activity and habit not only in memory and imagination and affections, but in the physical organism itself.* The man who has been hot-tempered, or sensual, or addicted to intoxicants, finds the old stimuli impotent as long as this sweep of divine comfort is in his soul; and the physical tracks of the old stimuli, the well-worn grooves by which the old temptations were wont to approach the mind, are broken up and replaced by other grooves in time, by which other higher, holier stimuli reach the mind and heart. Not that it is made impossible for the old, evil stimuli to reach the soul, but it is made vastly more difficult and their impact is far more faint. This, we take it, is the first great *function* of blessing in moral renewal.

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Professor George T. Ladd, of Yale, says: "All the researches of physiological psychology imply that changes in the material organism and changes in the changing mental states are causally connected. . . . We affirm that mental states, changes in consciousness, are a *cause* of changes in allied cerebral centers, and, through them, in the other tissues and organs of the body." ("Physiological Psychology," pp. 472, 475.)

As the late Professor John B. DeMotte, of DePauw University, put it: "Every voluntary act, whether of good or evil, beats its own path a little smoother, so to speak, for another of like character, and renders it just that much more difficult for one of opposite nature to get the right of way. . . . The superior sensitiveness of reformed 'trunk-lines' to their accustomed stimuli is a law beyond peradventure. It takes time to build character, because it takes time to build new channels through which the forgiven soul may hear and see and feel and act." ("Character Building," pp. 65, 84.)

The function of blessing is to hold the newly-converted soul steady in his choice of the higher and holier things until the old channels have been broken up and the new channels have been formed which bring pure and noble stimuli to the soul. Moreover, memory and imagination have become saturated with new concepts and visions, and by the law of association of ideas these continually recur, so that the man becomes in a literal sense a "new creation." As George Eliot makes Maggie Tulliver say in "The Mill on the Floss," "There are memories and affections and longings after a perfect goodness that have such a strong hold on me, I could n't live at peace if I put the shadow of a willful sin between myself

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and God." And so the brave girl makes the great renunciation of her life, the greatest any woman can make, and turns from the promise of a golden future to the hard bleak waste of loneliness and desolation—save that He who made the hearts of the two on the road to Emmaus burn within them walked invisibly by her side also.

The critics of emotion in religion insist that it is an ephemeral thing. And because ephemeral, worthless.

But is it really ephemeral? If we act in harmony with it, that holy emotion will reproduce itself. Noble emotions die only when they are allowed to spend themselves in mere emotion—only when appropriate action is denied them. The fact is that that wave of tender love toward your Lord which swept over your soul yesterday tends to reproduce itself to-day, if you have been acting in conformity with it. You say to your boy that if he gives way to a fit of anger to-day it will be easy to do so again to-morrow, and more easy the next day. That is the law of human sensibilities. But exactly the same thing is true of gracious and tender emotions and passions.

Jonathan Brierly, the English preacher-essayist, has an illuminating word at this juncture:

"Spiritual appetite, he (the physiologist) will say, is a form of thinking and feeling, and, as part of the law of its action, must have its rests and alternations. . . . But physiology has another thing to say to us. While it shows the spirit's highest exercises as dependent on an organ, it points also to a power which in its turn is operating mysteriously upon the organ and making it anew. It is well known that the brain of a great scholar contains deep and crooked furrows, and hundreds of

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creases which do not appear in the brains of ordinary men. This means that mental toil is continually transforming and developing the tool which the mind works with. The soul is ever shaping its instrument. And when we speak of the volatile character of religious feeling and desire we have to remember that in the spiritual evolution of humanity the brain-channels along which man's highest perceptions reach him will become immeasurably developed and his capacity in these directions correspondingly strengthened. We are in this respect the creators of ourselves. Every act of our will by which we respond to the celestial voices, by which we reject the lower and choose the higher, adds to the perfection of the instrument by which the heavens register themselves in us, broadens and deepens the channels along which flow the currents of spiritual power. . . . And the spiritual appetite, mutable as to its form, becomes in faithful souls an unchanging possession." ("Problems of Living," pp. 314, 315.)

It is as illogical to depreciate blessing in conversion as it is to decry love-passion in courtship. That love-passion disappears, or rather merges into a serener, quieter affection, which deepens with the years, as husband and wife travel over life's hill, until they "sleep thegither at the foot." It is probable that fewer men and women would assume the burdens of married life if they were not caught in the sweet meshes of this love-passion. The blessing that accompanies conversion is the emergence of the divine and human love-passion in the soul. Perhaps without it far fewer men would undertake the burdens and struggles of a Christian life. But with it they are encouraged to attempt the task. In both love and

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religion it is God's way of getting the best out of us. And in both realms the laws of the subsidence or transformation of passion are practically the same.

It may be that one of the chief reasons why the soul receives such conscious blessing in conversion is to make it sure of God. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" asked an ancient critic. The man who has felt the breath of God in conversion answers reverently, "Yes." Explain it as you will, the fact remains that when a man has gone through that experience he believes that he knows God—that he has tested the power of an endless life. And no amount of ridicule or unfaith on the part of others can make him doubt it. He may not be able to justify his faith with arguments. But he is just as sure he knows God as if he could. Like the old farmer who was listening to his college-bred son argue against Christianity and the possibility of regeneration—the old man could not match his son's dialectic skill, but he would answer: "Well, my son, I know how I feel. I know how I feel."

As Tennyson phrased it:

"A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt.'"

It is one of the very greatest things, if not the greatest, in one's life, to become sure of God and to know where and how to find Him. And may it not be that the subsidence of the joy of conversion is meant to spur us on to seek new and fuller manifestations of God—to impel us to a deeper study of His Word, a fuller obedience and

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a larger service? Thus in a real sense the joy of conversion gives us an appetite for the spiritual and divine. And it leads us on, by its ebb as well as its flow, to explore both the universe which veils His mysterious loveliness, and that Word from every page of which the glory of an immanent and glorious God still shines.

CHAPTER XX

Popular Antipathy to Feeling in
Religion

"I put the poetic and emotional side of literature as the most needed for daily use." (Frederick Harrison, in "The Choice of Books.")

"Till thought becomes a passion it hardly ever becomes a power." (Laurence Hutton.)

"I believe that feeling is the deeper source of religion, and that philosophic and theological formulas are secondary products, like translations of a text into another tongue." (Professor William James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 431).

"If the Church would be pure the Church must be passionate. Elevation of character depends on warmth of affection. . . . A fiery heart, by the energy of its own heat, creates a self-preserving atmosphere against the devil." (J. H. Jowett, "Apostolic Optimism," pp. 220, 221.)

"Man is an emotional being. At heart he is a dreamer and a lover and something of a poet; and no literature that fails to respond to his emotional and imaginative needs can long survive. No really vital work can be done in literature or any other art without deep feeling. Emotion is the basis of all great art, and pity is ever the sign of the masters, . . . and the writers, great or small, who have made the deepest impressions, and longest kept a living place upon the bookshelves of the world, are those most deeply imbued with 'the sense of tears in mortal things,' that wistful pathos which so strangely haunts all the actions of men and women, and is no less present in their joy than in their sorrow—the pathos of being alive at all, alive in a world where every experience is mysterious or seemingly charged with some unknown immortal meaning. This poignant quality is in Æschylus and Homer and Shakespeare and Dante, in Balzac and Charles Lamb, and in all truly great literature. All great and vivid feelings lie close to tears, and, therefore, all great utterance; and no writing so fully illustrates this strangely moving power of words as the solemn cadences of the Bible. Open it where we will, be it some psalm of comfort, some love-song of Solomon, or some denunciation of Isaiah, and so thrilling are the words that the tears spring to our eyes." (Dr. John Watson.)

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Not long ago a committee from a wealthy Church came to the writer to secure a little aid in getting a new minister. Among other things they said they did not want a preacher who appealed to the emotions. In this they were emphatic. Almost in the same breath they eulogized the minister who was just leaving them. And he had kept them in laughter and tears for four years!

If the committee meant that they wanted a minister with a solid body of thought to his sermons, and who would not become hortatory before he had completed the development of his theme, we can heartily sympathize with them. If, however, they meant that they wanted a minister who would not probe the conscience and awaken uncomfortable feelings within his hearers, we should dissent.

Ex-president Charles W. Eliot is quoted as saying that the religion of the future will be intellectual and not emotional, and that religious emotion is the result of defective culture, and will cease when education and evolution have done their work.

In a recent ministerial meeting a scholarly clergyman classified "emotion" in religion with the outbreaks of colored people in the South, and with the "fits" and "spells" of the people who attended early-day camp-meetings.

A recent author, a college professor in a denomina-

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tional school, declares that the emotional elements in the revival meeting, the Kentucky feudist war, and the Negro camp-meeting are identical.

A writer in the Journal of the Religious Education Association said recently: "Those who permit religious hysterics on Sunday are most likely to permit dirty sport on Monday, unfaithful committee work on Tuesday, and so on."

All of this is indicative of a widespread hostility to the expression in any degree of feeling in religion.

It could be shown that the cleanest, highest-grade athletics of England and America have been played by such young fellows as Coleridge Patteson, Ion Keith-Falconer, Henry Drummond, G. B. Studd, Charles T. Studd, Joseph C. Hartzell, and William McLaughlin, all of whom risked and some of whom lost their lives in the service of humanity, and all of whom were enthusiastic Christians of the experimental type. The last-named, an Ohio Wesleyan sophomore, lost his life in the heroic work of rescuing women and children from the burning Iroquois Theater in Chicago.

It is not surprising that irreligious men, who have never been moved upon by the Divine Spirit, should take this attitude toward experimental religion. Such men did not understand the phenomena of the early Church's spiritual baptism. They attributed to drunkenness that which was the purest work of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. But it is surprising that the professed followers of Christ should join in this attack on experimental Christianity, and that many excellent people should be shamed into assuming this attitude, lest they should be accounted provincial and crude.

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We are bound to believe that this attitude, which does such infinite harm by rendering impossible any re-creating and renewing work of God in the life, is the result of misapprehension of the place that feeling or emotion or "blessing" has in the development of moral and spiritual beauty and strength in the soul. Hence we propose in this chapter to show that this attitude toward a religion that embraces the feelings is unnatural, unphilosophical, and unscriptural.

It is unnatural because there is in every other department of human life the fullest recognition of the emotions. The drama, which is the most popular form of appeal now made to mankind, is full of the play of the emotions. The whole gamut of feeling is swept from delirious mirth to profoundest pathos, and the theaters are crowded from dome to pit. The political rostrum makes its constant appeal to the passions. The social circle, which a hundred years ago, even, was hedged about with conventionality and punctilious etiquette, is now marked by the utmost freedom from restraint and by uproarious mirth. But men and women come home from the theater or political meeting or social function, where they "nearly died" from laughter or from tears, to sneer at the crudity and vulgarity of the men and women who manifest emotion in the Church.

It is unphilosophical because all life has a right to self-expression. Herbert Spencer said that "in the genesis of a system of thought the emotional nature is a large factor—perhaps as large a factor as the intellectual." And if in the genesis of a system of thought, how much more in the application of that system to conduct and life! And he goes on to say, "The harmonious action

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of all a man's faculties is necessary to true living, under whatever aspect we view it."

Charles Darwin recognized the connection between the moral and emotional nature when he said:

"Up to the age of thirty poetry of many kinds gave me great pleasure, and even as a schoolboy I took intense delight in Shakespeare. I have also said that formerly pictures gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now for many years I can not endure to read a line of poetry. I have tried lately to read Shakespeare and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures and music. If I had my life to live again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature."

When such masters in the realm of scientific thought recognize the intimacy of the connection between the moral and the emotional natures, it certainly behooves us who are interpreters of ethics and religion to seek to give it its true place.

Matthew Arnold, skeptic that he was, recognized this relation. "The noblest souls of whatever creed, the pagan Empedocles as well as the Christian Paul, have insisted on the necessity of an inspiration, a joyful emotion, to make moral action perfect. . . . The permanent virtue of religion is that it has *lighted up* morality; that it has applied the emotion and inspiration needful for carrying

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the sage along the narrow way perfectly, for carrying the ordinary man along it at all. Even the religions with most dross in them have had something of this virtue; but the Christian religion manifests it with unexampled splendor." ("Essay on Criticism," pp. 402, 403, third edition.)

A sound philosophy requires that the emotional part of man in religion, as everywhere, should find adequate expression in order to a normal life. As Horace Bushnell says in his sermon on "Unconscious Influence:"

"We find every man endowed with two inlets of impression; the ear and the understanding for the reception of speech, and the sympathetic powers, the sensibilities or affections, for tinder to those sparks of emotion revealed by looks, tones, manners, and general conduct. And these sympathetic powers, though not immediately rational, are yet inlets, open on all sides, to the understanding and character. They have a certain wonderful capacity to receive impressions and catch the meaning of signs and propagate in us whatsoever falls into their passive molds from others. The impressions they receive do not come through verbal propositions, and are never received into verbal propositions, it may be, in the mind, and therefore many think nothing of them. But precisely on this account are they the more powerful, because it is as if one heart were thus going directly into another and carrying in its feelings with it. Beholding as in a glass the feelings of our neighbor, we are changed into the same image by the assimilating power of sensibility and fellow-feeling."

We are born to feel as well as to think. The suppression of feeling, after thought on high and holy sub-

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jects, is an abortion and does violence to our essential constitution. Nature retaliates by a reaction—by making high and holy feeling an impossibility. She revenges herself on us by compelling a distorted view of the facts. An artificial, dwarfed, and conventional type of religious life results, which is neither satisfying to one's self nor attractive to others. We begin by *damming* the religious feelings; we end by *damning* religion itself.

The life of the lovers of God described in Scripture was buoyant, glad, and natural. "They did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people." "And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." The life of those early Christians was so buoyant, free, and radiant that the world looked on amazed, and whispered, "How these Christians love one another!" The love-hungry, of whom there were millions then as there are now, drew near and warmed their hands by that genial and beauteous blaze. They hovered around the periphery of the charmed circle and said in their hearts: "O! that I had a joy and comfort like that!" "The joy of the Lord was their strength." And rich men and poor men, and soldiers and philosophers braved the scourge and rack, and embraced prisons and death that they might find a place in that inner circle of love and gladness.

John Stuart Blackie said that "the early Church worked by a fervid moral contagion, not by the suasion of cool argument," and that "the Christian method of conversion, not by logical arguments, but by moral con-

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tagion and the effusion of the Holy Ghost, has with the masses of mankind always proved itself the most effective."

While repentance (*metanoico*) in Scripture always means to change the mind, and while the reasoning faculties have robust recognition, yet still more fully is the affectional nature recognized. On every page may be discerned the frank, full-pulsed beating of the heart. It is not obtrusive or spectacular. There is no straining after effect. Pathos never becomes bathos. But love, laughter, and tears sweep over the pages as sunshine and shadow sweep over a lake on an April day.

David comes up to Jerusalem with the ark, jubilant over its recovery and over what its presence will mean to his people, and leaps and dances in his joy. Michal sneers at his religious demonstrativeness. Her religion was of the strictly conventional type. And God smote her with barrenness to the day of her death. And the Michals of to-day who sneer at demonstration in religion have the same penalty. We have observed that through all the years. They may or may not be scholarly. They may or may not be eloquent. They may or may not be popular. But they always are barren. They never bring into the world spiritual children.

We repeat, therefore, the proposition that the suppression of religious emotion is alike opposed to nature, to a sound philosophy, and to Scripture teaching and examples.

Dr. John Watson in "The Inspiration of Our Faith" puts it strongly:

"Every great movement which has stirred the depths of life and changed the face of history has sprung from

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some profound sentiment and powerful emotion. Love for Jesus established Christianity on the ruins of the Roman Empire and saved civilization from anarchy and chaos. Later a passionate emotion swept over Europe like a tidal wave in the Crusades, sending forth the chivalry of Christendom to redeem the holy sepulcher from the Moslem. It was a mingling of the feelings of indignation and pity, kindled by the earnestness of Wilberforce, and intensified in later years by Mrs. Stowe's novels and Whittier's poetry, which struck the shackles off the slave. . . . Some persons have a notion that insofar as you exalt the emotions of Christianity you diminish its dignity, undermine its reality, and lessen its convincingness. They prefer the Ten Laws of Moses as recorded in the Pentateuch to their interpretation in the Sermon on the Mount, and are more at home among the proverbs of Solomon than with the parables of Jesus. They are afraid that when one is lifted and impelled by feeling he is leaping from the solid rock into the air. They do not understand that emotion can bring us into regions of truth which reason can not reach, and a parable may be quite as much in touch with fact, and therefore quite as true, as an article in a confession. The Te Deum is not less true but more true than the Athanasian Creed, and good George Herbert's poems are truer than the Confession of Faith. To suppose that emotion is an unsafe guide in religion is to believe that a land surveyor's plan of heaven would give us a truer idea than the revelation of St. John gives. Emotion kindled in the heart by faith must be credited with the successes of Christianity. The Spirit of God sets men's souls on fire with feeling, and then follows action—the serviceable,

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mighty, and effectual deed. Christianity obtained her martyrs and won her victories not because men reasoned that Christ was the actual Son of God, nor because they concluded that His moral law was the most perfect righteousness, but because multitudes of ordinary people loved Him with all their heart so that they were willing and ready to die for Him."

It was Dr. Alexander Maclaren, perhaps the most influential preacher in the Anglo-Saxon world of this generation, who said:

"There is a kind of religious teachers who are always preaching down enthusiasm and preaching up what they call 'sober standards of feeling' in matters of religion. By which, in nine cases out of ten, they mean precisely such a tepid condition as is described in much less polite language when the Voice from heaven says, 'Because thou art neither cold nor hot I will spue thee out of My mouth.' What is the real meaning of the 'sobriety' that some people are always desiring you to cultivate? I should have thought that the last piece of furniture which any Christian Church in the nineteenth century needed was a refrigerator! A poker and a pair of bellows would be very much more needful for them. For, dear brethren, the truths which you and I profess to believe are of such a nature, so tremendous either in their joyfulness and beauty, or in their solemnity and awfulness, that one would think that if they once got into a man's head and heart, nothing but the most fervid and continuous glow of radiant enthusiasm would correspond to their majesty and overwhelming importance."

"Brethren, not to be all aflame is madness, if we believe our own creed. Isaiah says in one of his gigantic

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metaphors, 'The Lord's fire is in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem.' Does that apply to most of our Churches, Nonconformist or Episcopalian? A fire and a furnace—does that describe the Church? An ice-house would be a better illustration of the facts in a great many cases. 'He shall baptize you with . . . fire;' and if it does anything it will kindle emotion. Again, that fire cleanses by kindling. John's water-baptism washed the outside. There is a better way of making things clean than that. Fire purifies, either by melting down the obstinate ore and bringing the scum up to the top, from whence it may be skimmed, leaving the residue clear; or it cleanses by dissipating the cause of the foulness; and as it passes off, the stain melts from the surface of the disfigured clay. The great glory of the gospel is to cleanse men's hearts by raising their temperature, making them pure because they are made warm, and that separates them from their evils."

Why is it that so few people care for theology, while so many care for the Bible? It is for the same reason that so many care for flowers who have no interest in botany. The Bible is full of concrete life—full of men and women who thrill with emotion. They have a theology, implicit, though rarely formally expressed, but they are scarcely aware of it; least of all would they be able systematically to 'elucidate' it. And the fascination of Scripture is this very abounding vitality, this naturalness, this manifestation of truth in the terms of life itself.

And Christianity, though it is a doctrine and, in a limited degree, a ceremonial of worship, yet at its deepest is feeling—a reproduction of the moral passion of Jesus and of His affection for the Father and for men. No

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one ever caught and reproduced to the utmost Christ's feeling toward God and toward men, as no one has ever caught the full heat of Vesuvius's glow. Yet enough has been caught and reflected to make men say, "For me to live is Christ," and "I could wish myself accursed for the sake of my brethren according to the flesh." Enough of Christ's passion for God and man has been imparted to make of His Church a great world-conquering force. Yet Christianity becomes a world-conquering and an individual-conquering force only when it is feeling as well as doctrine and ceremonial. And only in proportion as we catch Christ's passion of love do we become reproducers of Christianity and powerful in extending it in the world.

The *Vallisneria spiralis* is a peculiar flower, which will grow to any height in water, but which comes to bloom only in air. So religion grows in the realm of knowledge, but it comes to bloom and reproductive power only in the warm atmosphere of the heart.

CHAPTER XXI

Twice-Born *Gentlemen*: Another
“Foot-Note”

"Did you ever happen to see that most soft-spoken and velvet-handed steam-engine at the Mint? The smooth piston slides backward and forward as a lady might slip her delicate finger in and out of a ring. The engine lays one of its fingers calmly, but firmly, upon a bit of metal: it is a coin now, and will remember that touch, and tell a new race about it, when the date upon it is crusted over with twenty centuries." (Oliver Wendell Holmes.)

"To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior, and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold on religious realities." (William James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 189.)

TWICE-BORN GENTLEMEN: ANOTHER "FOOT-NOTE"

MR. HAROLD BEGBIE'S book "Twice-Born Men" has had deserved popularity. It is clear gain to the progress of the Kingdom when a secular writer conducts a "clinic of regeneration" for the general public. Mr. Begbie's portraits are skillfully drawn and, like Henry Drummond's messages of twenty years ago, in the language of another realm than that of theology. It is the nomenclature of psychology that Mr. Begbie has applied to these subjects of divine grace, just as Mr. Drummond used the terminology of science in discussing like themes. This it is, as well as its keenness of analysis and mastery of detail and sense of proportion, which has made his book so fresh and attractive.

Many, however, join in the chorus of appreciation for a propaganda that regenerates "The Puncher" and "Old Born Drunk" and "A Tight Handful" and "The Criminal," who stiffen visibly when it is suggested that *gentlemen* need the renewing grace of conversion.

That, we are assured, is a very different matter. "To be sure," we are told, "the drunkard and harlot, and the 'down and out' crowd generally, need conversion. But the man who is born a gentleman does not need to be born again."

The pecadillos of men of genius have often been ex-

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cused on the ground that they were not to be judged by the same standards as ordinary men. A famous tenor of our generation who has been involved in various scandals both in his own country and America has been excused on this theory. "In his history of the Renaissance, John Addington Symonds apologizes for Andrea del Sarto's tragedy and Raphael's sins by saying, 'We must remember that these artists are not to be judged like ordinary men.' That was Byron's plea; he was a man of genius, and did not propose to submit himself to laws that were quite proper for peasants and clodhoppers. That was Wagner's plea, for when public opinion in Munich and Paris criticised him for cruelty and neglect to those whom he should have loved, he tossed off the moral obligations jauntily and haughtily by saying, 'Am I not to have a little pleasure myself in hours when I am giving pleasure to the whole world through my genius?' "

No intelligent man needs to be told that the Christian system has no place in it for such a theory. And the notion that conventional morality and respectability are all that God asks of us is equally repugnant to the teaching of Jesus. "Ye must be born again," was a universal fiat. And Martin Luther but voiced the universal Christian consciousness of the apostolic Church when he said, "Conversion is the article of a standing or falling Church."

Fortunately abundant testimonies exist to changes in the lives of respectable gentlemen as distinct and comforting and as significant as the changes that took place in the characters from London's under-world described by Begbie. The transformation was less patent to the

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world because the sins of these men were not gross. Indeed, they were not of the sort that the world classes as sins at all. But to men who experienced the renewal it was as marked, illuminating, and inspiring as the emergence from darkness to light of the grosser men whom Begbie pictures.

Take as an example that Harvard man of large wealth, Frederick H. Rindge, who died recently in Los Angeles. Born of wealthy parents, reared in the Athens of America, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and educated in its great university; surrounded by the most exclusive social circle; familiar with the natural sciences, literature, and the technical knowledge of the manufacturing business in which he was engaged; and reared under the influence of the broad moral culture of Unitarianism, Mr. Rindge appeared to those who knew him as an ideal gentleman. He knew no vices. He was self-controlled, clean, and honorable in his mode of life. There is probably not a Church in America that would not have willingly received him into its membership without any profession of a change of heart. Yet through the quiet influence of a Christian woman, the aunt of his wife, Mr. Rindge came to feel his need of the birth from above, and emerged into a life of conscious fellowship with God so marked and comforting as to lead him to arise in the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Los Angeles and say in the presence of an audience of two thousand people, "I have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets spake." It was an experience so precious to him that, while he was always ready and able to converse well on any subject, he was most ready to speak of the dealings of God with his soul. It was his joy, after nearly a score of

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years in the Christian life, to write and print for private circulation a little book entitled "The Best Way," in which he told the story of his religious life; while he took every opportunity to confess to his friends personally the reality and blessedness of the life into which he had entered.

During all this time he was transacting in honest ways a vast and increasing business, and was a member of many directorates; was a munificent giver to his native city of Cambridge and to his adopted city of Los Angeles, as well as to the benevolent causes of the Church of his choice, the Methodist Episcopal. When death came, in 1905, before he was fifty, it found him strong in the faith he had embraced a score of years before. And his own words of confidence were fulfilled: "The voice of God will guide and counsel and comfort to-morrow as well as to-day, I have faith to believe, and so I rest in faith, and faith brings rest. That sweet voice will be with me on my last bed, if I am faithful, and 'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord' will bring me peace."

The conversion of Professor Edward Everett Hale, Jr., at Schenectady, N. Y., under the preaching of Dr. W. J. Dawson, is fresh in the mind of the reading public. Attention is called to it here only to note that the change was immediate and conscious and most comforting, although Mr. Hale's life had been perfectly correct and honorable; and both for that reason and because of his earlier training, he would be peculiarly unsusceptible to sudden conversion.

A few years ago the writer heard from his own lips the story of the conversion of Mr. K. J. Sundstrom, a Swedish gentleman of wealth and broad culture. He

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is a graduate of two European universities and a gentleman of unusual refinement and dignity of bearing.

Coming to America and entering business in New York, he followed the conventional religious practices in which he had been reared, which meant a Sunday morning attendance at church and occasional partaking of the Holy Communion. In reading the Book of Acts he saw described such manifestation of spiritual life as perplexed him. Nothing he had ever seen corresponded to it in any sense. After much reflection he consulted two or three men, in the correctness of whose lives he had great confidence; but they confessed themselves to be as fully in the dark as himself as to the significance of these experiences. "So I shut myself in my room," said Mr. Sundstrom, "with my open Bible before me, determined to know what that religion was which was described in the Book of Acts. I stayed there two days—praying, reading, comparing Scripture with Scripture, until my soul was flooded with light and gladness, and I emerged into conscious sonship to God."

Though his pastor had been one of the men who had told him he did not know what the Scriptural experiences meant, he was broad and discerning enough to see that this new religious experience had developed Mr. Sundstrom into a remarkably effective Church worker, and he utilized his service in every possible way. Mr. Sundstrom is at the head of a great business enterprise in Michigan and is one of the most effective lay workers the writer has ever known.

The personal testimony of Henry M. Stanley it was the author's privilege to hear a few years before the great explorer's death. He had gone to Africa representing the

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New York *Herald*, prejudiced against missions and Christianity, "as prejudiced as the biggest atheist in London." But the life of David Livingstone, so patient, so self-forgetful, so sacrificial, so heroic, made Stanley ask himself, "What is the matter with this man—is he cracked, or what?" And then he saw that it was Christ that made him so unlike other men. And Stanley went back to civilization converted in intellect—a believer because of the Christ he saw in Livingstone. Yet his heart had not yet been subdued "to the very quality of his Lord." But when on that memorable visit to Africa, when he and his force were pushing through the thitherto unpenetrated forest of the great central zone, and had become lost, and part of his force under Major Bartelott had become separated from him, and he was almost out of provisions, and all about him were enemies thirsting for his blood, and it looked as though certain death was staring him in the face, "in the darkness of that awful night," Mr. Stanley said, "I threw myself on my knees and poured out my soul to God. I promised Him if He would send deliverance I would serve Him and confess Him before the world as my Lord. And He did it," continued the hero of Africa, "and I desire to acknowledge Him before the world as my Savior." At a great religious gathering in Exeter Hall, London, on his return to England, when prayer was offered, while bishops and clergymen stood with their heads bowed, during prayer, Mr. Stanley humbly kneeled, as though he could not bow low enough at the feet of his Master.

These men were virile personalities—the farthest removed from sentimentalists or rhapsodists. Yet their emergence into the favor and blessing of God was as

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clear-cut and emphatic as the experience of the denizens of the slums of whom Mr. Begbie writes.

The field is exceedingly rich in examples. Bishop Robert McIntyre was what he calls "a Pharisee" up to the age of twenty-five. His outward life was blameless, and he was fond of contrasting his conduct with that of faulty Christians. But we will let him tell his own story as he gives it in the New York *Advocate*:

"As a child I had the usual traditional belief in Christianity which comes to the offspring of pious parents. I accepted without question the faith of my father and mother, but had no personal experience to confirm it. When death took them both from me and I was left head of a household of little children, while only a boy in years, my hereditary religion was too weak to bear the strain. I lapsed into blank Atheism for a time, and declared that a God who would rob a poor helpless family of its natural support was no God at all. In bitterness I renounced all my mother's teachings and denounced as hypocrites or deluded fools all who worshiped my father's Savior. For years I scoffed at the Bible, scorned the Church, and tried to hinder others in the way of life. I was utterly miserable in my soul, even while uttering my Pharisaic boasts that I was morally clean and far superior to the weak Christians whose limitations and defects I decried. Shame flushes my face as I recall my mean censure of struggling Church members, and a sinking sense of my ignorance and cruel misjudgment of humble folk far better than myself comes over me as I think of it. O, the spiritual tragedies all around us! O, the pitiful struggles unseen by us in the hearts of those we meet! Good people prayed for me

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all this time, but I rebuffed all efforts to lead me aright, and gloried in my godlessness. But His loving kindness endureth forever. Slowly I was forced out of Atheism by the proofs of design in Nature, and became a Deist. I fell under the spell of Thomas Paine. I carried his book 'The Age of Reason' in my pocket and was ready for a debate with any one. One cold February night in 1877, as I passed First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in St. Louis, I heard singing and went in. Dr. Bushong, of the Central Methodist Church, was the preacher. As I sat listening to this stranger, a curious sensation crept over me. I had heard many sermons, but this one was addressed to me. The Holy Spirit had given the speaker a map of my wanderings, and he quickly opened my stubborn mind. For the first time I saw 'sin' as it is, and the sight shook me like an aspen. When he presented Christ to us, tears wet my face and divine love gloried within me. A man who knew me and sat near, said, 'Go to the altar.' But the mood of rebellion was dominant, and I whispered, 'No.' After repeated calls I was still rebellious, and as the congregation went out, my friend said, 'Come up and meet the preacher.' I did so. He noticed my agitation and asked if he could help me. I said, 'I would like to talk to you.' He said, 'Come to my study at 3 P. M. tomorrow.' I was there, and we two discussed the problems of salvation a long time. As the short winter day closed and darkness crept into the room, he rose and said, 'How do you feel now?' I said, 'Doctor, I feel worse than when I came.' He had allowed me to use my familiar arguments, and I had talked myself back into my bewildered and mutinous frame of mind. I said, sadly,

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'There is no hope for me.' He said, 'Have I failed, then?' I said, 'You have.' Serenely he replied, 'Very well, I have a Friend who never fails in a case like this.' I thought he intended to send me to another man, and said, 'Where is this Friend?' He said, 'He is here; kneel down with me.' I did so and in one moment realized I had lost my battle and was in another sphere of teaching. I could not speak or make reply, quote Scriptural difficulties or recite shortcoming of others. I could only listen; and O, how he pleaded for the sinner and entreated God to help me! And when I began to pray, too, the Friend came into the twilight place where we bowed, and both were deeply affected. When we rose he said, 'Are you saved?' I said, 'No, sir; but I must go farther in this matter. Will you be at the church to-night?' He said, 'I will be there if you attend.' He was there; and as I recall the scene, he preached that evening. Dr. Cunningham, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was present and thinks he preached the sermon. This may be, as, my mind being highly wrought up, I may have forgotten. It is possible both men spoke that night, as it was the custom then for one to preach and another to exhort after him. At any rate, Dr. Cunningham was there and remembers all the facts. God bless them both for their aid to me. When the call for penitents was made I was deeply convicted, yet, in stiff-necked defiance, I refused to go; I had often ridiculed the 'altar' and would not surrender. I was violently exercised, a psychological storm raged within, my deepest nature seemed rent and torn. I held fast to the seat and said, 'If I get out to the street I will keep away from this place.' Thus I struggled, pale and trembling, until the preacher

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raised his hands for the benediction. Then I heard a voice saying, 'Young man, if you leave this place unsaved, you are forever lost.' Then the flood of pent-up feeling burst the dyke, and I ran to the chancel and fell prone. I recall nothing for some moments, but soon heard above my sobs the sweet old hymn, 'Come to Jesus Just Now.' A mountain of guilt pressed me to the floor. I could scarcely live; my spirit seemed to rive my very flesh; with laboring breath I prayed the Deist's invocation, 'O God, help me!' A saintly white-haired woman heard my plea and divined my difficulty, which was to accept Christ as Lord and Savior. She said to me, 'Son, repeat this prayer with all your heart: O God, for Jesus' sake, save me!' I did it, and on the word the mountain fled away and a sea of heavenly love swept over me. I, even I, was pardoned, reborn, adopted. I saw the Father's face over me, I knew the Father's arms under me, I felt the Father's heart against me. All the world seemed new and all the dear ones round me rejoiced as with streaming eyes I tried to tell in my first stammering rapture what a glorious Redeemer I had found.

"I slept but little for joy that night, and next morning I preached my first sermon in my boarding-house while I waited in the sitting-room for the breakfast bell. I said to the men who knew me as foremost in opposition to the gospel: 'Friends, you know my past, how outspoken I was against religion. Now I am a Christian, converted last night, and resolved to serve Jesus with a glad spirit and obedient will. I hope I have your good wishes and that you will go with me on the heavenly way.' Some wished me well and shook my hand fervently, some scoffed at me, even as I prayed for them.

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Then I tasted the bitterness I had given others, and thus began the pilgrimage of one who goes 'sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.' "

Congressman Pratt, of Iowa, whom his Christian wife and pastor made the subject of united and earnest prayer, came home from the session of congress to openly surrender to Christ and to publicly confess that he had emerged into a peace and comfort that was unspeakable. Afterwards he entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Professor William Nast, German scholar and teacher in the Military Institute at Gambier, Ohio, came under a profound sense of his need of God through hearing the religious testimony of some plain people in an Ohio village, and after great struggles emerged into a crystalline consciousness of acceptance with God and entered the ministry, becoming the founder of German Methodism in America.

Charles G. Finney, the brilliant young lawyer of Adams, N. Y., cultivated in intellect and flawless in his personal habits, came under deep conviction of sin, which ended in a conversion as vivid—we had almost said as spectacular—as that of the most depraved castaway. He had made up his mind, after weeks of consideration, to yield his life to God, and had gone to a piece of woods to pray. "But," said he, "when I attempted to pray I had supposed that if I could only get where I could speak aloud, without being overheard, I could pray freely; but lo! when I came to try I was dumb. In attempting to pray I would hear a rustling in the leaves, as I thought, and I would stop and look up to see if somebody were not coming. This I did several times. . . . 'What!'

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I said, 'such a degraded sinner as I am, on my knees confessing my sins to a great and holy God, and ashamed to have any human being, and a sinner like myself, find me on my knees endeavoring to make my peace with an offended God!' The sin appeared awful, infinite. It broke me down before the Lord. At that point this passage of Scripture seemed to drop in my mind with a flood of light, 'Then shall ye seek Me and find Me when ye shall search for Me with all of your heart.' I instantly seized hold of this with my heart. I had intellectually believed the Bible before, but never had the truth been in my mind that faith was a voluntary trust instead of an intellectual state. . . . I continued to pray and to receive appropriate promises for a long time. I knew not how long. I prayed till my mind became so full that, before I was aware of it, I was on my feet tripping up the ascent toward the road. The question of my being converted had not so much as arisen to my thought; but as I went up, brushing through the leaves and bushes, I recollect saying with great emphasis, 'If I am ever converted I will preach the gospel.' I soon reached the road leading to the village, and began to reflect upon what had passed, and I found that my mind had become most wonderfully quiet and peaceful. . . . I went to my dinner and found that I had no appetite to eat. I then went to the office and found that Squire W—— had gone to dinner. I took down my bass viol and, as I was accustomed to do, began to play and sing some pieces of sacred music. But as soon as I began to sing those sacred words, I began to weep. It seemed as if my heart was all liquid; and my feelings were in such a state that I could not hear my own voice in

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singing without causing my sensibility to overflow. I wondered at this and tried to suppress my tears, but could not. I put up my instrument and stopped singing.

"After dinner we were engaged in removing our books and furniture to another office. We were very busy in this and had but little conversation all the afternoon. My mind, however, remained in that profoundly tranquil state. . . . Just at dark Squire W——, seeing that everything was adjusted, bade me good-night and went to his home. I had accompanied him to the door, and as I closed the door and turned around, my heart seemed to be liquid within me. All my feelings seemed to rise and flow out; and the utterance of my heart was, 'I want to pour out my whole soul to God.' The rising of my soul was so great that I rushed into the room back of the front office to pray. There was no fire and no light in the room; nevertheless it appeared to me as if it were perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door after me, it seemed as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. It did not occur to me then, nor did it for some time afterward, that it was wholly a mental state. On the contrary, it seemed to me that I saw him as I would see any other man. He said nothing, but looked at me in such a manner as to break me right down at His feet. I have always since regarded this as a most remarkable state of mind, for it seemed to me a reality that He stood before me, and I fell down at His feet and poured out my whole soul to him. I wept aloud like a child, and made such confessions as I could with my choked utterance. It seemed to me that I bathed His feet with my tears; and yet I had no distinct impression that I touched Him, that I recollect.

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"I must have continued in this state for a good while; but my mind was too much absorbed with the interview to recollect anything that I said. As soon as my mind became calm enough I returned to the front office and found that the fire that I had made of large wood was nearly burned out. But as I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that there was any such a thing for me, without any recollection that I ever had heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves of liquid love; for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings.

"No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love. These waves came over me, and over me, and over me, one after the other, until I recollect I cried out, 'I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me.' I said, 'Lord, I can not bear any more;' yet I had no fear of death. How long I continued in this state I do not know; but it was late in the evening when a member of my choir—for I was the leader of the choir—came into the office to see me. He found me in this state of loud weeping and said to me, 'Mr. Finney, what ails you?' I could make him no answer for some time. He then said, 'Are you in pain?' I gathered myself up as best

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I could, and replied, 'No; but so happy that I can not live.'"¹

But Mr. Finney lived, as we all know, to become one of the most remarkable preachers of the gospel that any generation has produced. Mighty in argument, imperial in will, a commanding personality in every way, he was largely the creator of Oberlin College, as its president during its formative period, and by great revivals that he conducted built into strength a chain of Congregational and Presbyterian Churches extending from New England to Ohio, including Broadway Tabernacle, of New York City. Some of the great minds of that era were his trophies.

The focus of these facts is, these cultivated, moral men, successful and respected in their several communities, came under as pronounced conviction for sin, and emerged into as radiant and epochal an experience of grace, as did any of the wrecks of men described by Mr. Begbie, for whose special benefit, according to patronizing reviewers, the process of conversion has been devised. And the Church of Christ will make a monumental mistake if it ceases to insist that self-complacent gentlemen shall make the same humble confession of need and submit to the same process of moral renewal that it exacts of the men whose sins have already wrought their social undoing.

¹Autobiography, pages 19-21.

CHAPTER XXII

The Moral Equivalent of War

"The nation that shortens its swords lengthens its boundaries." (Emerson.)

"When Christian business men give the same intelligence and energy to the work of the Church that they now give to their own business enterprises, the proposition to evangelize the world in this generation will be no longer a dream." (The late John H. Converse, President of Baldwin Locomotive Works.)

"T is not for man to trifle, life is brief,
And sin is here.
Our age is but the falling of a leaf,
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours,
All must be earnest in a world like ours.

"Not many lives, but only one have we;
One, only one.
How earnest should that one life be,
That narrow span!
Day after day spent in blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil." (*Anon.*)

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THE phrase is Professor William James's, where he says, "What we need to discover in the social realm is the moral equivalent of war; something heroic that will speak to men as universally as war does, and yet will be as compatible with their spiritual selves as war has proved itself to be incompatible."¹

Among the many fine things in Professor James's book none is stronger and truer than this. And his diagnosis is equally good. "Does not the worship of material luxury and wealth, which constitutes so large a portion of the spirit of our age, make somewhat for effeminacy and unmanliness? Is not the exclusively sympathetic and facetious way in which most children are brought up to-day—so different from the education of a hundred years ago, especially in evangelical circles—in danger, in spite of its many advantages, of developing a certain trashiness of fiber?"

The Church's fiber is affected with the same flabbiness of which Professor James complains. After making generous allowance for all the aggressiveness and courage and heroism which exists in individuals or groups, here and there, of which the mission fields furnish the most notable examples, it yet remains to be confessed that the prevailing mood of the Church of to-day is un-

¹ "Varieties of Religious Experience," pages 365, 367.

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heroic, if not dilettante. The majority of our members, and in all well-to-do Churches a very large majority, consider attendance on public worship once a week an ample fulfillment of their Church obligations. Mr. Gladstone used to refer facetiously to these churchmen as "oncesters." The Sunday newspaper, the Sunday evening spin in the automobile, the "week-end" social gatherings, the growing use of the Sabbath for the entertainment of friends at dinners, and, above all, the self-indulgent spirit of our age, have enfeebled the sense of religious obligation among Christians until an attendance once a week on the means of grace is considered a high standard of devotion. A member of our Church in a recent pastorate who had not been attending much, was greatly pleased with a pastoral call, and in her exuberance said: "Can't you call and spend the evening soon? Some Sunday evening?" And then, flushing, "O, I believe you have a Church service then, do you not?"

So far as the public services of God's house being considered ■ means to an end, the preparation for a larger and more active service for Christianity beyond the Church's portals, it is to be feared that this conception of public worship is unknown to the majority of Church members.

Professor James is right. What is needed is the moral equivalent of war. In that may be found a spur for the Church's indolence and dilettanteism. And given the moral equivalent of war, may we not hope to find men springing to service for God with the same snap and enthusiasm that characterize the soldier or football player?

Such a moral equivalent of war may be found in a threefold campaign by the Church: First, an aggressive

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evangelism, especially when accompanied by out-door or theater-hall features; second, the effort to evangelize the heathen world in this generation; and third, the crusade against liquor and its kindred evils.

The latter two features are really involved in an aggressive evangelism. It is manifestly inconsistent to attempt the conversion of your fellows without attempting to reach all men, everywhere. And every experienced soul-winner knows that he can not win many men to Christ without coming into sharp conflict with that evil trinity of foes to righteousness: the saloon, the gambling-room, and the brothel.

The finest example of this moral equivalent of war that we have ever seen in an American Church was the Clarendon Street Baptist Church, of Boston, during the pastorate of the late Dr. A. J. Gordon. Not only were conversions taking place right along in the regular service, but companies of workers went out every Sunday to the wharves, holding services for the dock laborers; to the street-car barns, conducting a meeting each Sunday for the carmen; and in the parks, for the crowds which assembled there from Sabbath to Sabbath. In addition to this, ninety Chinese were being instructed each Sabbath in a special school, involving the presence of ninety teachers. All this besides the regular work of the Church in the Christian training of its own children and catechumens.

Add to all this the fact that at all the social meetings of the Church you might see on the wall the list of the missionaries, home and foreign, eleven in all, being supported by this one congregation at a cost of twenty thousand dollars a year, and you have a record of work in-

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spiring to every friend of Christianity, while its effect on the local congregation was electric. It made it a hive of industry. The Church tingled with enthusiasm to the finger-tips. Three hundred people would be present at the midweek prayer-meeting. And that service had in it the pull of mighty spiritual forces. Never before or since have we seen a Church that seemed to be quite so fully realizing the ideal of the early apostolic Church. With its history since the death of Dr. Gordon, the great moving spirit of all this, we are not familiar. But this bit of history will illustrate the possibilities of a Church in a residence district, as it was at the time here described. It was an illustration of the moral equivalent of war in a single Church. There is no reason why it should not be duplicated in a thousand American Churches.

The effect of the same spirit in a down-town situation may be studied to advantage in the Central Hall Mission of Manchester, England. There, at the center of a city of half a million people, has been built up in a quarter of a century one of the greatest religious enterprises in the world. An old Wesleyan church which had gradually faded out under the respectable, dignified methods in vogue for half a century, and still in vogue among many American Churches, was about to be abandoned. A young Wesleyan preacher, S. F. Collier, was assigned to the work. He made a wide departure. The old church was torn down on its fine business corner, and a business block was built whose income was to be the chief financial support of the new enterprise, with a church hall at the rear, entered from two streets by an arcade. An orchestra, ■ brass band, and other bright features were introduced. The night service especially was framed to catch the pop-

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ular eye and heart; the workers were sent out into the streets to hold short preliminary services and to lead their crowds to the main service. Systematic and persistent visitation was done in all neighborhoods contiguous to the mission. Rescue homes and lodging-houses for men were established, with industrial features. The workers, after their Sunday afternoon service, took tea together at the mission hall, and were ready for the night campaign. In time a half dozen other centers were opened, all focusing in the main central mission. And at length the Sunday night audiences became so large as that Free Trade Hall, the largest hall in the city, seating six thousand people, had to be rented to accommodate them. We found the whole mission palpitating with abounding life. There was a joyousness and sense of power that was contagious and that imbued new recruits with the conviction that they had become a part of a force which was to conquer the world.

Our ordinary Church life of to-day is too conventional. It lacks the heroic appeal and it lacks resourceful and strategic methods. Even the most noble ideals and sermons fall limp if there seems no tangible way of carrying them into effect. The emotions are stirred by the appeal for self-sacrificing effort; and then, because there is no formulated plan of heroic service, the whole issue is a tide of feeling which reacts and which gives a sense of unreality to it all. With men, especially, there must be a discernible goal—something definite to be done—if their interest is to be gripped and held. We are persuaded that the number of men at work in our American Churches could be doubled if the Church would cultivate the "moral equivalent of war."

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We have illustrated by Dr. Gordon's Church and the Central Mission of Manchester the evangelistic approach and appeal. The present widespread anti-saloon campaign will illustrate a second phase of the Church's "moral equivalent of war." Evangelists like "Sam" Jones and "Billy" Sunday get a tremendous hearing with men because they have continually struck the strenuous note. Along with their appeals to men to turn to Christ has gone the appeal to fight organized evil. Whatever may be the verdict as to the direct spiritual value of their work, no one questions the civic influence of their campaigns. Whole regions have gone "dry" as a result of their meetings. And a multitude of men who have been indifferent Church members, or not members at all, have become aligned with the forces of Christ, actively, in these militant movements. It is the heroic appeal that has done it—the "moral equivalent of war." For men have iron in their blood and love to fight a real foe.

It has been proved in hundreds of local contests against saloons and other demoralizing institutions of society that dormant Christians have been galvanized into new life by the tocsin call to arms. And where such movements are not permitted to degenerate into mere campaigns of denunciation, they have uniformly proved stimulating to all the departments of the Church.

On the other hand, wherever Churches ignore these aggressive movements, whether from the fastidiousness of a false culture or from pure inertia, they slowly die. And many of them would die quickly were it not that their depleting ranks were being constantly reinforced by accessions from Churches which have been responding to the heroic appeals. The ecclesiastical public of America

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would be startled if it had the exact facts put before it of the sheer dependence for existence of many of the most prominent congregations of the country on other and more obscure Churches. We could name Church after Church where there have not been twenty conversions in ten years, but whose infusion of new blood has come from smaller Churches which cultivate "the moral equivalent of war." And the depressing omen for the future is that it is these inert Churches, slowly dying of respectability and self-restraint, which are, by their wealth and social position, molding the ideals and the policy of the general Church.

The third field of action which has in it the "moral equivalent of war" is the propaganda for Foreign Missions. In the wideness of the survey involved, in the magnitude of the enterprise, and in the dangers and difficulties to be met, there is an appeal to the imagination and to the heroic spirit that arouses men to their highest and best endeavor. Wherever this propaganda really takes hold on the virile thought and affection of a congregation, it reacts on the subjective life of a Church very much as an old-fashioned religious revival does. It stirs men and women to constant effort for others, to self-sacrificing giving, and to an exuberant gladness very much akin to the joy of Pentecost.

To achieve these results it is necessary that the enthusiasm for missions should be real, and not a painted fire—such as merely congregational or denomination rivalry, or loyalty to a pastor or Church board.

But when the vision of the world's need and the possibility of its evangelization becomes so vivid as that a Buffalo layman gives up an intended automobile that he

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may put five thousand dollars into missions; and that a college student sells the gold casing off his watch that he may pay for the education of a student in a foreign mission school; and that men go with one suit where they needed two—we have at work among us in our Churches “the moral equivalent of war.”

CHAPTER XXIII

The Church of the Out-Reaching
Arms

"It stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over its head." (John Bunyan, on the picture which Christian saw in Interpreter's house.)

"The Spirit and the Bride say Come; and let him that heareth say Come." (Revelation 22: 17.)

"But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." (Luke 15: 20.)

"The Church ought to be a society accepting the ideals of Jesus, and realizing them in the power of His life; consequently a society of people obeying the moral code of Jesus, and, therefore, a society of people manifesting to the world the breadth and beauty and beneficence of the Kingship of God in and through Jesus Christ. Is that what the Church is? That is what the Church ought to be, for that is the Divine intention.

"But some will say, What has all this to do with the evangelistic Church? And the very fact of the question reveals the weakness of the hour. The Church has largely failed in evangelism because the Church has not realized within her own borders the force of her own life. We ask how it is that the masses refuse to listen to her evangel, and are treating her, in so marked a degree, with contempt? Because the masses see perfectly well that she is not obedient to her own Master's ideals, and does not realize His purpose. That is the severest criticism, and it ought to make us blush, and hide our heads with shame, that the Church is not fulfilling her Master's ideals. The evangelistic Church is the Church which shares Christ's life, and in the power of it obeys His law, and thus manifests Him to the world. Thus alone can the Church engage in His work, and carry out His enterprises. When the Church realizes and manifests her Lord, in her personal membership, and corporate capacity, then, and then only, is she doing His work, the work of seeking and saving the lost. That is the evangelistic Church, and that is the true Church of Jesus Christ." (G. Campbell Morgan.)

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JESUS on the Mount of Olives, with arms outstretched toward the sinning city, is the figure before our eyes. "O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her brood beneath her wings!"

That attitude His Church is to reproduce. Not after a spectacular, artificial manner, but in a vital and genuine way. His passion for souls, His sympathy with sinning, suffering men, His faith in the recoverability of men at their worst—that attitude and spirit the Church is to incarnate. And unless she does so in a much larger way than at present there is no hope of an early return of a prodigal world to a waiting God.

Is it suggested that "out-reaching arms" is too strained a figure? A little melodramatic? It was not too strong a figure for Jesus. And the world has never misunderstood His attitude, while it is constantly misunderstanding ours. It never accused Him of coldness or indifference. Men all over the world are doubting priests and clergymen, and lay representatives of Christianity, official and unofficial; but they do not doubt Jesus. They remember His out-reaching arms.

What man can not recall his childhood cry over a childish hurt, and with it the child's refuge of a mother's

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out-stretched arms? And sympathetic lips that called, "Come, darling!" We can forget many things about our mother, but we can never forget the out-stretched arms. What prodigal, returning from a far country, can fail to remember the welcome of a father's open arms, with the never-to-be-forgotten word of greeting, "Come, my boy!" And so the Church, the Bride of Christ, takes her stand, all radiant with the consciousness of His fellowship, on the threshold of His earthly temple and stretches out her arms of entreaty to the wayward multitudes that sweep past, repeating with infinite tenderness the invitation of her Lord, "Come!" "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'"

The Church of the out-reaching arms means first of all a pulpit of out-reaching arms—an evangelistic ministry. And it means, second, a membership of intense human sympathy—a sympathy that is expressed as well as felt. The lodge has grown faster than the Church in America because it has a more visible brotherliness. Its fraternity may not be as genuine, but it is more direct and tangible. Next to His atoning death, Christ's greatest work was the creation of the brotherhood impulse. And most men are led to accept the former only as His bride, the Church, manifests the latter. Wherever you find a Church that truly reproduces the brotherhood spirit of Jesus in its ministry to the whole man, you find a Church that grows by leaps and bounds; for it is the most winsome fellowship below the stars.

More Churches fail from lack of heart than from lack of head. In our intensely competitive, intensely selfish, and intensely busy age the Church must manifest a peculiar unselfishness and sympathy if it is to win the mul-

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titudes. It must not only have the sympathy of Christ, but it must *express* it. For all practical purposes, we may as well not have the sympathy as not to express it. We follow Him who came to *seek* and to save that which was lost.

Frequently we hear men say: "The churches are open. The stated services are held. If people do not come to them it is their own fault."

There is no doubt of the correctness of this observation. Yet two facts break its force. First, no Church ever wins people to Christ which feels in that way about it. That was the elder brother's feeling toward the prodigal. How soon do you suppose the prodigal would have come home if he had known that the elder brother would have been the only one at home when he got there? His mother was dead. We know that, for she is not once mentioned in the story. If his mother had been living she would have reached the boy before his father did. If she had been alive, the boy would have come home sooner than he did. But he knew that he had a father who loved him; and so he dared to come in spite of the carping, censorious elder brother. The Church which says of the alienated multitudes, "It is their own fault," has not the love-passion of its Lord for men and will never be able to save them.

The second fact which breaks the force of this saying is that great multitudes of people misunderstand the Church. They have, from one cause or another, imbibed a prejudice against the Church. It may be that the bride of Christ has dressed so finely that they regard her as proud and haughty and are afraid to draw near to her. It may be that the bride of Christ has lived a long time

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in their neighborhood without ever seeming interested in them. They have had sickness, and she has never comforted them. They have been in poverty from low wages, or from being thrown out of work, and she has never seemed to care. They have been in prison, it may be from no very serious wrong-doing, and the bride of Christ has not visited them there; and gradually the feeling has gotten into their hearts that the bride of Christ is selfish and worldly and exclusive, and that she does not care for sinning, suffering people, if they are also poor.

Is it true that when entirely strange people who are somewhat plain in dress come to some of our churches, while they are made welcome by polite ushers, and probably the majority of the Church people in their hearts are pleased to have them come, yet there are some in the Church who arch their eyebrows, and wonder, and perhaps whisper, "Who are these people?" and mentally ask whether they are of "our kind." Is it not much more largely true that, however kindly disposed the congregation may feel, very few of them ever manifest it? Very few of them take the pains to show their good-will. Very few of them deny themselves the pleasure of hobnobbing with their own little circle at the close of the sermon, which is only a refined form of selfishness, in order to fulfill Christ's ministry of sympathy and brotherliness in the strangers.

The bride of Christ has as one of her first duties that of a hostess. And it ill becomes her to spend her time on herself—on self-congratulations: the eye saying to the hand, "How much I admire you!" And the hand saying to the foot, "How much I depend on you!" And the

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foot saying to the eye, "How much I adore you!" It ill becomes the bride of Christ to spend her time on these self-felicitations and compliments when her Lord's house is full of guests who should be greeted and bidden Godspeed in His name. The honor of the Bridegroom demands that the bride should not let a single guest go away feeling that he has been coldly treated in the house of the Lord.

Do we forget that in every city there are thousands of people—especially young men and young women away from home—who sorely need "mothering?" One secret of the success of the great young men's Bible classes that have been built up in various parts of the country by devoted Christian women has been the hunger in the hearts of young men away from home for the mother-touch. When Thomas Carlyle was nearing death and his friends were trying to comfort him, the old Scotchman turned away with a sob, saying, "It's a mither I want!"

Many of these people—the alienated multitudes—have come from countries where the Church has been greedy and rapacious, where she has made them pay dearly for it; where the many fees and forced contributions have seemed to the masses a species of graft, and they have come to despise the Church. When we remember that people of this sort are coming to us at the rate of a million a year; that they are filling up all our cities until they now comprise the majority, they and their children, in most of our cities—we begin to understand why so many in the cities are prejudiced against the Church.

Because of the conditions just described, the loneliness of many, the prejudice which the foreigner has imbibed against the Church, and the sensitiveness begotten

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in the masses because of their poverty—the Church must take an attitude of peculiar friendliness and tenderness toward men; she must be the Church of the out-reaching arms. The Churches of Wesley's time were open, but the people were alienated from them, and so Whitefield and the Wesleys used extraordinary means to show them that they cared for them. The synagogues of Jesus' time were open, but the people were scattered abroad as shepherdless sheep. But neither Wesley nor Whitefield nor our Blessed Lord counted open Church-doors a sufficient ministry. They went out after the alienated multitudes and sought them until they won them.

It is being said in many quarters that the Church's crown of brotherhood has passed to other organizations; that the lodge has taken its crown of comradeship and fraternity; that the labor union has taken its crown of sympathy and care for the rights and interests of the poor; that the State has taken its crown of ministry to the unfortunate and afflicted.

We do not believe this to be true, and yet, like much error, there is enough truth in it to float it. The lodge and the labor union rest upon a purely reciprocity basis, and that for the greater part of a distinctly commercial sort; while the State includes all Christians, and in caring for the helpless it has become that far Christian.

Nevertheless the Church may well take care lest she lose her crown. She must arouse herself to a more real and tangible *expression* of the sympathy and love which she feels for the masses of men and women, if she is to win them for her Lord. A street speaker in an English city was haranguing a crowd, claiming to be the Christ. As with one voice the crowd cried out: "Show us your

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hands! Show us your hands!" They wanted to see the print of the nails in the hands, and they had a right to ask it. And men have a right to ask of us the same thing. If we are Christ-men and Christ-women, where are the marks of our self-denials and sacrifices for them? Where are the indications that we weep over them and suffer for them, and that "we could wish ourselves accursed for our brethren according to the flesh?" If the Christianity of the future is to be more than a fashionable and æsthetic cult, anything more than a religion of the well-to-do, there must be a vast infusion of the self-forgetting, self-sacrificing spirit of Him of the manger, the garden, and the cross.

It is commonly supposed that the miracle-working power of the early Church was responsible for its wonderful growth. It had its influence, no doubt, but it was not the principal cause. It was rather the brotherhood spirit of the Church. In the closing verses of the second and of the fourth chapters of Acts we read the secret of it. The Christians lived in a daily fellowship of profoundest love. They sold their possessions and divided them among the poor of their number. They had all things common. It was not required of them by God's command to do so. Probably the Savior's words to the rich young man may have suggested it, but that was a specific command for a peculiar case. The Church did not afterward follow this practice of communism. In this case they were not commanded to do it. They did it because they loved to do it. It was the spontaneous impulse of a great affection. Back of that great sacrifice, what a force must have been pouring! A power that would make not only the men and women willing

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to do this, but that would make their families willing, that would make their children willing! To-day the children of any parents attempting to do this would have their parents before a lunacy commission instanter. Back of this act poured a new Niagara of love. Back of it lay a great new conception of life that made sacrifice sweet. It was a conception of life as an opportunity to join hands with Christ in saving a ruined world. It inconceivably honored them in making them co-workers with God. Back of it lay a new conception of the value of the human soul—even of the poorest and meanest—and of the place of those souls in God's thought and God's love, and therefore the place they must have in our thought and our love. Back of it was a blessing so great and overwhelming, such a revelation to their own souls of the love and power and preciousness of Christ, that money seemed an infinitesimal thing, and they were ready to pour it out like water.

What was the result? One result was that "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection." When the people could see before their eyes such a resurrection of dead nobleness and generosity, such a resurrection of buried glories, buried so deep that even their very existence had never been suspected, it was easy to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. With such a living illustration of the love and sympathy of men before their eyes it was easy to trust the love and sympathy of God. Ah! if we shall have living like that on the part of preacher and people, we undertake to say that humble ministers to-day will with great power give witness to the saving grace of their Lord.

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We are told that as another result "multitudes were added to the Church." In any age and anywhere such proofs of human love will lead men and women to the Church that manifests it as doves flock to the windows.

We are not called to community of goods, but we are called to the administration of our goods for the welfare of others, as well as of ourselves, to the glory of God. Hospitals to be erected? Yes, and more. Schools to be endowed? Yes, and more. Orphanages to be built and conducted? Yes, and more. Churches to be established and kept throbbing with vigorous life? Yes, and more. We are to *give ourselves*, day by day, in wise counsels, in brotherly warnings, in tender sympathy, in patient instruction, in visitation to homes or places of work, in self-forgetting ministration for Christ's sake. Every man or woman that does it will inconceivably honor God and promote His Kingdom. Every Church that does it will become a center of abounding, saving, rejoicing, glorifying life and power.

"What did this institution cost?" asked a gentleman of Mr. Quentin Hogg, of London, who had built up the great Polytechnic Institute of which London is so proud. "Not very much; simply one man's life-blood," was Mr. Hogg's reply. Every great thing costs; and if you will build up a great, strong, true Church of Jesus Christ, that shall send forth streams like that which John saw proceeding out from the throne of God, to refresh and renew and purify and fructify our great cities—if you will become indeed a great, wooing, winning, loving Church of the out-reaching arms, remember it will cost your life-blood. But it will pay! It will save men, it

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will rejoice your own soul to the uttermost, and it will set all the angelic choirs of heaven singing the song that shall never die.

Two or three summers ago we spent our vacation in Canada with the Iron City Fishing Club of Pittsburg. One day while we were at the noon-meal in the clubhouse, word came that one of the boys of the camp, John G., was lost. He had gone out for a short walk about nine o'clock, and, attempting a short cut from one trail to another in the woods, had become bewildered.

Immediately all the men of the camp made preparations for a thorough search. We divided ourselves into five parties, of five or six each. We were surrounded on two sides by Georgian Bay, therefore our search parties were to proceed from the camp as a center outward in five directions, diverging from one another like a fan. Each party had a compass and a revolver, and three pistol-shots were to be the signal that the lost boy had been found. We plunged into the forest, the party next to our own calling out that they had just killed a rattlesnake as they entered their section. The sky was dark with clouds, and soon it began to rain. Through dense woods and underbrush that had never been touched save by the Indians, over heaps of decaying logs, now making detours because of impenetrable barriers, and now climbing to the top of log heaps and leaping down, up, over rocky ledges and high hills, and then down into swampy ravines, with the rank grass and other vegetation reaching our faces, leaping from tuft to tuft of earth that would bear our weight, sinking occasionally to our knees in the morass, and everywhere lashed and swept by wet leaves and bushes and limbs of trees until we were not only wet

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to the skin, but drenched and dripping at every step,—so we plunged on hour after hour until we came out on the shore of Twelve Mile Bay, an arm of the Georgian Bay. Then we knew we had missed the boy. After a few minutes' rest we started back, dividing our party of six into two of three each, that we might more effectually cover the ground. From time to time we stopped and called and listened intently, or fired a single pistol-shot, and waited for some answering sign. But there was none. As dusk drew on, our apprehensions for our young friend increased, for wild animals were somewhat plentiful in that wide forest, including bears, which occasionally came out in the open. When we reached camp, about dark, we found all the parties in except one, with no sign of the missing lad. It was a sad group that gathered to discuss what next to do. The little steamer at the dock was sending out her hoarse note of distress, hoping that it might be heard by the lost boy. The father of the lad was pale and anxious, and his mother completely prostrated in her tent. "There!" said some one. "Did you not hear those shots? Three shots!" "No," replied others, "we heard nothing." "I am sure I heard three shots," said the first, "over in the northeast." Two Indian guides who had searched all afternoon vainly, thought they heard the shots, too, and dashed off in the trail leading in that direction. After what seemed hours to us gathered around the big bonfire on the edge of the woods, though it was scarcely more than half an hour, there came quite clear and distinct three shots. "There it is again!" cried some one, excitedly. We answered eagerly with two shots, and then again there was long waiting. At last the signal was repeated, this time nearer.

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"They are working their way around to the south of us; let us hurry to meet them!" And off three or four men dashed into the woods, including the father of the boy. Presently away off through the forest gloom could be discerned the flash of torches, and then there was a cry, "John is found!" And then what a shout went up from our crowd on the edge of the woods! And the torches grew brighter and more numerous, and by and by, as we all rushed forward to meet them, the boy, with his shoes worn absolutely off his feet, pale and weak from his long wandering and fast, but still "game," staggered into camp, supported on either side by a man. Women and children cried, and the men sang the doxology. And when he had received medical attention and food, over and over again the lad told the story of his wanderings and of how the last of the searching parties had found him, and had themselves become lost in the darkness until the two Indians found them and brought them all in.

Profound as was the human interest of the incident, it had a deeper significance still; for as we plunged through those forest fastnesses all that afternoon and evening, and up and down high hills and defiles and morasses, we thought of Him who went out into the mountains to find us—the sheep that were lost. And over and over again the words kept singing themselves in our hearts:

"But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed,
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed
through,
Ere He found the sheep that was lost.

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But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep
There arose a glad cry to the gates of heaven—
‘Rejoice, I have found My sheep!’ ”

It is this spirit that we must reproduce as ministers and people if we are to win the wandering, thoughtless multitudes to Christ and His Church.

CHAPTER XXIV

Rediscovering the Individual

"The longer I live, the more confidence I have in those sermons preached where one man is the minister and one man is the congregation; where there is no question as to who is meant when the preacher says, 'Thou art the man.'" (Henry Ward Beecher.)

"It requires more faith and courage to say two words face to face with one single sinner, than from the pulpit to rebuke two or three thousand persons, ready to listen to anything on condition of forgetting all." (Bossuet.)

"For ten years I addressed gatherings of persons in number from ten or fifteen to five or six thousand each. . . . I have been for more than twenty-five years an editor of a religious periodical that has had a circulation of more than a hundred thousand a week. . . . Meanwhile, I have published more than thirty different volumes. Yet I can see more direct results of good through my individual work with individuals than through all my spoken words to thousands upon thousands of persons in religious assemblies, or all my written words in periodicals or books." (Henry Clay Trumbull, "Individual Work for Individuals.")

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JESUS discovered the individual. Old Testament prophets knew how to appeal to the crowd by symbolic act or spectacular marvel, but their message was for the nation. It took Jesus to discover the value of the individual man. He left the crowd at Jericho to deal with the individual Zaccheus. He remained outside Samaria's thronged streets that He might deal with the one woman at the well. One of His priceless evenings He spent on Nicodemus. More than once you find Jesus slipping away from the crowds. You never find Him slipping away from the individual.

The early Church followed their Lord in this appreciation. Philip, the deacon, leaves the crowd at Samaria's revival to bear Christ's message to the lone man in the Gaza Road chariot. Peter and John were transfixed at the Beautiful Gate by the opportunity of winning the lame man. Doubtless Peter recalled how Andrew had led him to Jesus, and both remembered how Philip had brought Nathaniel. Paul spent years in the Mamertine prison, preaching daily to an audience of one—the soldiers chained one by one to his wrist. From them came Rome's "Thundering Legion." And in "his own hired house" the apostle to the Gentiles could not have spoken to crowds. It was mostly the individual touch. That was a true picture of early-Church methods which Bulwer-

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Lytton drew when in "The Last Days of Pompeii" he represents Olinthus the Nazarene as walking on the street beside Apæcides, the brilliant young Greek, and pouring into his ear in low, passionate tones the story of Jesus. So it was that the early Christians conquered the Roman Empire.

Our generation needs to rediscover the individual. We have lost him. In the crowding of populations, in the marshaling of large figures, in the spectacular reports of the press, in the emphasis by Churches and organizations on big crowds, the value of the individual is lost sight of. The individual makes no appeal to the imagination. Zeal does not kindle in his presence. It requires the crowd to arouse the flame.

Hence the need of the Church's rediscovery of the individual's value. We must feel some such sense of his value as that teacher of a blind and deaf and dumb boy in the Ohio School for the Deaf felt when, in answer to our question, "How much time do you spend with this little fellow?" she replied, "Twenty-four hours a day for fifty weeks in the year."

We must have such an appreciation of the value of one life as Helen Keller's teacher had, who thought it worth while to spend most of her life in "burrowing for a soul."

Our foreign missionaries appreciate the value of the individual. Robert Morrison counted one worth his first twenty years in the mission field. There are plenty of missionary centers to-day where the discovery and redemption of one choice youth would mean a Christian province, if not a Christian nation. The Scotch preacher's

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revival was declared a failure because "no one was converted but wee Bobbie Moffatt." But "wee Bobbie Moffatt" took Christianity to the heathen of Central South Africa and started David Livingstone on his great career, besides giving his daughter to be Livingstone's bride.

We helped raise funds for an extensive evangelistic campaign in an Eastern city costing \$3,000. There were less results from it than from the work of one college senior who during his Christmas vacation worked unremittingly to bring the young folks of a village to Christ. He got twenty-five by personal work, and four of them are now preaching the gospel and two or three others are preachers' wives.

Is it not true that we have fallen into the habit of looking to the public service and its leader for results, and to it only? Extravagant prayers are offered about endowing the preacher or evangelist with power; prayers which it would not be wise for the Almighty to answer. At any rate no living person ever saw such prayers answered. May it not be that God thinks too much of the value of the human ties that bind the soul-winner to the soul won, and of their function in the future development of the convert's character, to grant the petitions for such wholesale, machine-effected mass-conversions as are prayed for? Theodore L. Cuyler, when he looked lovingly back over his half century's work in Brooklyn and the three thousand souls he had built into the Lord's temple, said, "I have handled every stone."

That American student of whom Drummond tells us had a true appreciation of the value of the individual soul. He was a student in Edinburgh University Medical

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School. For months he had been trying to win a skeptical friend to Christ, but his own graduation came without his friend's yielding. After packing his trunk to leave, he bethought him again of this skeptic. He unpacked, and that year got his man. That friend is now at the head of a medical mission in China. Was it worth staying for?

The method of Mr. Moody—no, the spirit of Mr. Moody—was in striking contrast to that of many men who make evangelistic appeals. Mr. Moody was always eager to finish his message and get into the inquiry-room, where, Bible in hand, he would deal with seekers. Many evangelizers lose interest in the service the moment the sermon is concluded. In work among students the value of the personal touch is illustrated in two ways: first, the preacher finds that the most effective way of reaching the student body is by having consultation hours, where he can deal with them one by one in private conference. It is illustrated again by the work of the students on one another. Again and again in a week's service we held recently in a Missouri college some student would come into our consultation-room bringing an unconverted friend. And one young girl who had not found peace when she came in as an inquirer, was beautifully blessed when, a little later, she came bringing an unconverted friend and in the act of telling how anxious she was to see her friend saved.

Persistence is of primary value. A city wholesale grocery drummer went forty-eight times to a certain grocery to get its trade, and failed forty-seven times. The forty-eighth time he got it. And he kept it. Maltbie Babcock possessed that trait among his many admirable

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qualities. He never let go after he got on a man's track. Not every day, but again and again he would touch the life until it yielded to persistent personal impact. Baltimore is full of the stories of it.

To seize strategic opportunities is of superlative importance.

"I felt impressed to speak to him about his soul," said a business man of our acquaintance, "but I neglected it. And now he is dead!"

It was said with deep emotion, for the man had committed suicide in a time of discouragement.

"There is a foreign gentleman who would like to speak to you," said one of our officials in a Baltimore pastorate at the close of a morning discourse.

We went down and spoke to a fine-looking, cultivated Hindu. He had been studying for some years in an English university and had come to America to do some post-graduate work for his profession; but, though so highly cultured, he was still a heathen and very bitter against Christianity. We invited him home to dinner. We talked of many things and pressed Christ on him. He parried every advance. Then we told him our experience as a sinner saved by grace, and asked if we might pray with him.

"Certainly."

So down we kneeled there in the parlor. When we arose there were tears in his eyes, but no surrender in his tones. And we parted. We had a courteous note from him a few days later from New York. At the end of two years we heard from him again—this time as a speaker at a missionary convention in a Central-western State, where he publicly told that he had been led to Christ by that

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hour in that Baltimore parlor. It was our one chance at that passing pilgrim. How thankful we are that we were able to seize it! "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge in the grave whither thou goest."

The reader will recall the striking testimony of Henry Clay Trumbull; first, how he himself was led to Christ by the letter of a friend who impressed immediate decision upon him; and second, how this great editor, author, and public speaker to multitudes on Sunday school themes declared that he had seen more direct fruit for God from personal appeals he had made to individual men than from all his speeches and editorials and books. It is tremendous, a staggering testimony.

Finally, *nil desperandum*. Hopeless cases will yield to the personal touch. We received his daughters into the Church and called on him, the fine old soldier-father, an officer of the Civil War. As we were leaving we spoke to him of Christ. The veteran seemed cold, indifferent; but the little message was left, and a prayer ascended for him as we left the house. We did not know then that our prayer was convoyed to heaven by an angel company of prayers. For in the memory of that old man there lingered the incense of sweet prayers offered for him daily by one who twenty years before had gone to the heavenly country—the wife of his youth and vigorous manhood. That night at midnight he awoke with a strange impulse on him to pray. He arose and knelt and prayed. Heaven bent near, and blessing such as he had never known and never dreamed of flooded him. All night and all day following the glory abode as of another world. Our telephone rang, and at his daughter's re-

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quest we hurried over. He met us at the door, this straight old soldier, with outstretched hands and said: "I have sent for you to ask if you will receive me into the Church. I have been wonderfully, strangely blessed."

We received him, and for these eighteen months past—for this happened in Kansas City—this old gentleman has been a faithful member of our Church, received into full connection at the age of seventy-six. Alongside of him stood another man of seventy, and others all the way down to childhood, illustrating the universality of the gospel's appeal and its beautiful adaptation to every age and condition, and most of them won by the personal touch.

Somewhat over four years ago, in a conference of Baltimore Christian workers which had for its consideration the one theme, the art of "taking men alive," we secured the services of Mr. H. Wellington Wood, who then held the position of general manager in a large commercial concern in Philadelphia, to tell us frankly and freely how he had won so many men to Christ. Here was a man with almost crushing responsibilities upon him; with a large number of traveling men under his control; with the sort of energy that develops a high commercial enterprise; with an amount of detail upon his hands that would stagger the vast majority of men, yet studying and practicing the divine art of taking men alive as the supreme business of his life. When his address was over, a friend sitting near remarked, "He's caught it." "Caught what?" "The contagion of catching men." And he had. And within a few months there comes a book to our study-table entitled, "Winning Men One by One," which is the unvarnished, simple, sincere,

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straight-forward account of an enterprising business man working at his main business of "taking men alive." Here is an account of winning a business man of twenty-five years' acquaintance during a walk home from Church; there is an account of winning a young man to Christ at a baseball game with whom he had gone for an afternoon outing; here is an account of how he won seven of his traveling salesmen to Christ at a commercial conference in his office; there is an account of how he won a brilliant physician in the latter's home on April 6, 1906, from a dissipated life, and that physician since that time, catching the contagion of "taking men alive," has won forty people to Christ in two brief years; here is an account of how he won a barber, the proprietor of the shop, when no one else was there; here is an account of how he won a man of thirty-two, the soloist of a wealthy Church, to Christ at the close of a banquet given for men. The pages simply teem with life and tell the story of a man who, applying a similar devotion to winning men to Christ as he does to his business and while consuming but an amazingly little time in the actual work, has become an expert in the art of catching men alive. Exceptional? Exceptional only in his willingness to sit at his Master's feet and catch that contagion, and then go forth to catch men. Any man can be an exceptional catcher of men. Any man can do it who will be patient, persevering, enterprising, enthusiastic, willing, and obedient enough to sit at His feet who promised to make us "to become fishers of men."

CHAPTER XXV

Country Boys in Crowded Cities

"The throng and pressure of multitudinous life, the intensity of business competition and social emulation, the extravagance of wealth and the exigencies of poverty, the scarcity of time and the superabundance of pastime, the presence of crowds and the absence of fellowship, the avarice-chill and the amusement-fever, the vitality of vice and the nervous prostration of virtue, the rush and whirl and glare and busy emptiness of a life at top speed—in these things the Church finds its opportunity, its call, and its danger." (Henry Van Dyke, "The Church in the City" in "Essays in Application.")

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THERE is an extraordinary though not unaccountable movement of the people toward the cities. One hundred years ago one person in thirty lived in a city of eight thousand population or more. To-day one in every three lives in the city. The proportion will soon rise to one-half. In fifteen of our States a majority of the population is to be found in cities. In eight States, two-thirds. A man is yet living who has seen Chicago grow from one hundred to two millions and more. From Boston to Baltimore it is city practically all the way. Railroads, commerce, and manufactures, plus the desire for the city's pleasures and fellowships, are responsible for this centripetal movement.

The country boys feed the city's brawn. Without them its whirring wheels would soon stop. The strong, vigorous physique cultivated by the simple life of the farm is in constant demand to fill up the gaps made by city dissipations. If the heaviest forms of toil, such as track-laying and ditch-digging, are now wholly in the hands of foreigners, Italians, Hungarians, and Mexicans, the scarcely less arduous labors of city warehouses and factories look to the country lads for the doing. A young man asked for his envelope on a Saturday night at a big wholesale house where he had been employed as a porter,

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and announced his intention of resigning. "What's the matter? Haven't we treated you right?" asked the manager. "O yes, you've treated me all right enough." "Maybe it's more pay you want?" "O! I'm not complaining about the pay. But you see, it's this way. When I used to be on the farm I got awfully tired of threshing. Every year it was three or four weeks spent on our own and neighbors' farms in threshing. And I got tired and told the folks I was going off to the city to get an easier job. I've been here eight months now working for you people, and I've had to thresh every day since I came."

Only the vigorous young fellows from the farm are equal to the heavy physical tasks of the city. The country boys fill up the city's brawn.

Then the country boys are filling up also the city's brain. Take any city and investigate the early life of the leaders in the various vocations. Most of them are country- or village-bred. Dr. Frank Gunsaulus is authority for the figures for Chicago, as follows: Seventy-two per cent of the lawyers, seventy-one per cent of the merchants, sixty-three per cent of the engineers, and eighty per cent of the preachers are country-bred.

"Who's Who in America" will yield similar returns for all the larger cities, with the exception, perhaps, of Baltimore and Philadelphia, where a larger per cent of the inhabitants are born in the city.

Plain living and high thinking develop the intellectual leaders of the race everywhere. But it takes only a generation or two for the glare of the electric light and the automobile pace to deplete both mind and body, and a fresh infusion of country-blood becomes necessary. The

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old Yorkshire proverb comes to mind, "There's three generations from shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves."

The country boy not only fills up the city's brawn and brain, but he fills up the city's ruin.

At the Chicago World's Fair a crowd of people were gathered in the art gallery around Thomas Hovendon's "Breaking the Home Ties." Men would pass on, and then come back with a suspicious moisture in their eyes. The picture was that of a country lad leaving home. The family were gathered about him. His father had the satchel, the hack-driver stood at the door, whip in hand; the children were ranged around looking eagerly at their big brother; the family dog was all attention, as though he knew some unusual event were transpiring; while in the center stood the mother and the boy. She was looking into his eyes, and through his eyes down into his soul, as though she were saying: "O my boy! Will you be true?" And the lad was trying to look brave and unconcerned; but you could almost see the lump in his throat.

Now, the city to which he was going meant very different things to the mother and the boy. To the boy it spelled just one word: O-P-P-O-R-T-U-N-I-T-Y. He knew that city trade controlled country trade; the city press controlled the country press; the city politicians controlled the country politicians; the city means opportunity. But to the mother the city spelled a different word. To her it spelled in lurid letters I-N-I-Q-U-I-T-Y. She knew of the gambling-rooms, the low dance-halls, the lairs of the scarlet women, the seductive indecencies of the stage, the great bloated spiders, white-aproned and diamond-bedecked, who stood at the open door of the

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saloon-web and by the wizardry of music and feverish comradeship drew in the unwary. Hence to her the city meant iniquity.

Which was right, the mother or the son? Both were right; for the city means both opportunity and iniquity. Which it means for the country boy depends on the kind of heart that beats under his jacket. When Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, took his boys to London and turned them loose for a day, many of them came back to the hotel at night tired and hungry, but with memory and imagination full of the treasure of the British Museum and the Tower of London and St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. The other lads came back with memory and imagination aflame with the lustful scenes of the low theaters and dance-halls and with the seamy side generally of London life. The bees went for the honey, the buzzards for the carrion.

But because country boys pouring into city streets are met by thronging temptations, it is the Church's part to make it as hard as possible for them to go wrong and as easy as possible for them to go right. Their loneliness is to be met by a peculiar friendliness. The craving for companionship may be supplied by the social gatherings of the Church, to which special pains should be taken to invite all young people away from home. Some pastors secure a list of all the stenographers and other young women away from home, and at intervals arrange social gatherings where they may meet the Church young people. Elect women in the Mt. Vernon Place Church, Baltimore, have for years followed the practice of inviting students from Johns Hopkins or Goucher College home to dinner with them on Sundays. One family showed the

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spirit of the Master in occasionally inviting home a servant-maid, who had united with the Church. It was little wonder that with such encouragement that young woman aspired to larger things. She went to Washington and took the Rust Hall training course for nurses, and is making a most useful worker. In a thousand ways the Church can minister to these homeless ones in the name and spirit of One who Himself was a homeless Man.

If the names were printed of the leaders in business and commercial circles of our land who came to the city from the country, poor, friendless boys, and whom the Churches received with open arms and trained into a strong manhood, the number would be astonishingly large. Dwight L. Moody was such a country boy, and the Boston Church that opened its life to him, and a little later the Chicago Church that likewise welcomed him, had much to do in giving that dynamic worker to the world. The feelings of many a country boy in the city are described in the words of Mr. Moody when, many years later, he referred to his entrance into city life: "I remember how I walked up and down the streets trying to find a situation, and I recollect how, when they answered me roughly, their treatment would chill my soul. . . . It seemed there was room for every one else in the world, but none for me. For about two days I had the feeling that no one wanted me. I never have had it since, and I never want it again. It is an awful feeling. It seems to me that must have been the feeling of the Son of God when He came down here." When the teacher of that young men's Bible class in Mt. Vernon Church came around to the shoestore where young Moody had found employment and, laying his hand on his shoulder, asked

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him to give his heart to God, he little knew what a day's work he was doing for his Master. Andrew scarcely did more when he led his own brother Simon to Christ. And it is for that sort of alert and loving care for country boys in crowded cities that this chapter is a plea.

Full of vice and shame as our cities are, yet there is no place where there is also so much of the glory and beauty of our Lord. Men there by thousands, transacting in honest ways the honest business of the world, are living daily the vicarious life. Nothing has so much impressed the writer in the score of years that he has spent as pastor in the great cities of the land as the men with great commercial cares upon their minds to whom hundreds were looking for direction in business matters, who always had time for the Master's work, in counsel, in prayer with returning prodigals, in safeguarding the lads of the Sunday school, in pouring their money and time and affection into the great enterprises of the Kingdom—such men as the late John S. Huyler, of New York, and David Preston, of Detroit, and John H. Converse, of Philadelphia, and as James E. Ingram, of Baltimore, and Norman W. Harris, of Chicago, and Charles C. Stoll, of Louisville, and John A. Patton, of Chattanooga, and James G. Shepherd, of Scranton, all of them men, mark you, who not only gave or are giving liberally of their means and counsel, but their deeper lives, their prayers and persuasions and wealth of personality, in leading men to the life hid with Christ in God.

We would not have fewer country lads in our cities. We can not believe, with John Ruskin, that this pouring of the young life of the country into the city is national waste and deterioration. Rather do we believe that it

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is the fulfilling of God's good plan for bringing down the holy city to the earth.

When Nebuchadnezzar found his hill-country bride, Amytis, weeping with homesickness for the hills of Bactriana, he built the elevated parks, rising tier above tier, to the height of the city walls, the so-called "Hanging Gardens of Babylon." He did not take the bride back to the hills. He brought the hills to the dusty plain, and Amytis might walk among these hills and streams, and hear the murmur of the waterfalls, and listen to the singing of the birds, and catch the fragrance of the flowers, and imagine herself back again in her childhood home. So the country lad need not go back to the farm to live the pure and simple life. Amid the dusty streets and whirring wheels and busy roar of the city he may have the pure air and lofty outlook and heart-songs of God's high hills.

The Church's "first aid to the injured" in caring for the country boy in the crowded city is the Young Men's Christian Association. No development of Christianity in our generation has meant so much to the lads away from home as this organization. Situated always near to the down-town boarding-houses, where most of the country boys sleep and eat—there is not room in the average city boarding-house to do more without stepping on some one—the Y. M. C. A. is the natural rendezvous for the lads who are decently inclined. The gymnasia, the games, the swimming pools, the entertainments, and, above all, the social fellowship of these organizations, form the greatest preventive remedy the Church has for the thousands of young men away from home. The more advanced work of moral and spiritual training is neces-

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sarily committed to the individual Churches. How any pastor or Church can afford to oppose or neglect the work of this organization we can not understand. Without it the work of caring for the moral needs of the host of away-from-home young men would become infinitely more difficult. Our experience as a student away from home in one great city, and as pastor in four large cities, leads us to the conviction that if every Young Men's Christian Association were wiped out to-day, to-morrow the Church would have to begin building just such an institution to take its place or suffer irremediable defeat in our cities.

This in no sense excuses the Church from persistent effort for young people away from home. At best only about one-tenth of the young men of a city can be cared for by its Young Men's Christian Associations. Every congregation should be as alert for visitors' welfare as were the Churches to which Dennis Crane, the author of "A Vicarious Vagabond," went when, disguised as a tramp, he visited several London Churches. The London *Methodist Recorder* says:

"It is refreshing to hear him tell how he was received in one of the great Wesleyan Churches. Some young woman in the pew behind him handed him a book and pointed out the liturgical passage of the day. Her companion whispered to him the number of the hymn. A young gentleman who sat next to him showed him the place in the further responsive reading. 'Such marked attention,' says he, 'to one of my aspect, if not without parallel, was certainly remarkable; the more so because paid by members of the gentler sex, since women naturally shrink more than men from dirty, verminous-

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looking creatures, not because they are less pitiful, nor because they are more proud, but because they are more sensitive.'

"Later in the day he went down to a Wesleyan mission and was accosted by one of the men scouts, who cheerily pulled him into the building, introduced him all around, and seated him in a service of song. Afterwards he took him upstairs for tea, and although the make-believe tramp spoke about his clothes, the scout lovingly said: 'That do n't make any difference. Christ do n't look at a man's clothes. Make yourself at home with everybody, and everybody will with you. Ha! Ha! We do n't take any notice of clothes here.' And in parting he said, 'I hope we shall have the pleasure of seeing you again, sir.' Such a description as that does one good to read, after all the muck-raking representations of the coldness of the Churches with which our American magazines have been filled."

The first Methodist church built in America had a fireplace in it, and was therefore classified as a dwelling. That was a happy omen; for the genial warmth and good-fellowship of that open fireplace got into the blood of Methodism and has never disappeared. In one pastorate the writer was advised by a prominent official of his Church that they did not care to reach "the boarding-house population that lay to southeast of the church, but to go after the people that lived north and east and west of the church;" that is, the elegant-home district. But such advice and attitude was altogether exceptional. The heart of pastor and people as a whole beat true to the sympathies of Christ, and the heartiest of welcomes

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was given to rich and poor alike. And so it does everywhere. Snobbery has slight standing in the Church of Christ.

The one thing we could wish for is a greater *manifest* sympathy. If the good-will is not expressed in some tangible way, it might as well not exist. It is as important that a Church manifest its good-will to outsiders as that a merchant display his wares; not for the purpose of display, by any means, but to make known what sort of business is being transacted there, and who is at the head of the house.

It is the wooing note that is the winning note. Nothing draws as does love. "Why do you go clear across the city to that Sunday school when you have others so much nearer?" was asked a boy. "O! they love a fellow over there." That is the secret of most of the Church's power. And more Churches fail from lack of heart than from lack of head.

Back in Indiana seven boys were brought up on the farm. Friend Robert was one of them. Every day the Christian mother gathered the family about her and prayed for them, every boy by name. For some cause the fourth lad, John, took offense and ran away from home. The days became weeks and the weeks months, but they brought no tidings of John. Robert says that he and the other two younger boys never got prayed for by name at family prayers after John left home. Mother would pray for William, the eldest, and then Henry, and then Edward, and then John; then she would begin to tell the Lord how much they all loved John, and how much they missed him, and how lonely it was without him, and

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that they did not know where he was, but that He, the Heavenly Father, knew; and O! would n't He please bring John back home! And so it went all winter and early spring. One day in May little Robert was going through the apple orchard, which had burst already into pink-and-white glory; the perfume, too, as sweet as heaven; when he heard his mother talking at a little distance: "Yes, John is coming home. He is coming home to-night." Robert waited for no more, but went flying out to the field where his brothers were at work, and breathlessly announced: "Say, have you heard the news? John is coming home this evening." "Who said so?" "Mother." "How does she know—has she had a telegram?" "No; but I heard her talking out in the orchard, and she said he was coming home this evening, and I guess if mother said it it's so." It was before the day of rural free delivery, and the boys knew no mail had come from town. The older boys understood what little Robert did not know: that mother had been talking with God, and her information was from above. That evening, as they all sat around the table, mother arose with a low cry, and before any one could speak was out of the door, and past the pump and old smoke-house and hay-stack and down the lane by the time the family got outside the door. And sure enough, yonder in the distance came a familiar figure, and a moment later mother and John were clasped in each other's arms.

It is this attitude toward the wandering that the Church assumes when she follows her Lord; for all the love that ever overflowed from a mother's heart was first born in the heart of God. And we can not but

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believe that as the Church becomes saturated with its Lord's love-passion we shall see penitent men and women turning their steps toward God's house as naturally as penitent John turned his footsteps to his mother's hearth.

“Even as a son, that after pining
For the sweet absent mother, hears
Her voice, and round her neck entwining
Young arms, vents all his soul in tears;
So by ill custom far estranged,
Along the gay and thoughtless track,
To childhood's happy home unchanged
True love doth bring the wanderer back—
Snatched from the cold and formal world, and prest
By the fond mother to her glowing breast!”

—Schiller: Bulwer's translation, alt.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Church's Ministry to Students

"The reins of the future have been caught and held by young hands. At fifteen Victor Hugo presented a poem to the Academy; at sixteen Bossuet dazzled all who heard him by his eloquence, and Leigh Hunt was a prolific writer of verses. At seventeen Michael Angelo had room in the palace of Lorenzo de Medici, Mozart had entranced the courts of Germany, Chateaubriand had a commission, Alexander Hamilton commanded the attention of his country, Washington Irving delighted the readers of the *Morning Chronicle*. At eighteen Charles Spurgeon was pastor of a congregation, Zwingli had read the New Testament so well as to doubt the authority of the Church; Grotius had published an edition of 'Marcianus Capella.' At nineteen Bach was organist at Armstadt; George Washington was a major; Webster had understood Espinasse; Bryant had written *Thanatopsis*; George Stephenson was carrying in his brain an improved steam engine; and Galileo was awake to the secret of the vibrations of the bronze lamp of Pisa cathedral." (Frank W. Gunsauls, in "Young Men in History.")

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THE changing character of the student body in every college town makes the work of ministering to them difficult. It is to be feared also that the local Church authorities take less interest in them because they are not to be permanent factors in the life of the Church. They have little money to aid the Church with, and their stay is brief. Hence the Church that has chiefly an eye to business looks on its student members as "additions" rather than "accessions." There is a difference.

Then the college is a world in itself. Its life runs in a separate channel from that of the townspeople. And the Church is apt to forget the very existence of the throng of young people who come and go on the campus.

This is to both the Church's and students' superlative loss. The students lose the spiritual care they sorely need, and the Church misses a supreme evangelistic opportunity. It loses thereby thousands who came to college as members of Christian Churches.

In the State University of Michigan there are seven or eight hundred Methodist young men and women. In the University of Kansas there are six hundred Methodist young people. So also in the University of Missouri. It is estimated that one-fifth of the student body of the State universities—twenty thousand in all—are from Methodist homes. The State schools are debarred by the separation of Church and State from giving any religious instruction or inspiration. What little is done in

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these colleges is done through the college Young Men's Christian Associations. As these are often in the hands of busy or immature young men, they are in no sense adequate to the moral and spiritual needs of the student body.

Some religious denominations have placed a college pastor in the larger State schools. It is devoutly to be hoped that their example will be followed by all the denominations; but the number is few as yet, and the burden of caring for the student body still rests, for the greater part, upon the local Churches. It is imperative that they recognize their responsibility and give themselves to it as the highest form of missionary endeavor, and the one yielding largest returns which presents itself to the Church of God. For the students are picked men and are the coming leaders of their communities. To allow them to drift away during the years of their student life because they make no immediate financial returns to the Church and are not to be a permanent part of its life, is criminal neglect.

Years of experience in handling this problem teaches us that the strategic time to get hold of students is the first month or two of their stay in college. They have not yet formed their associations. They are approachable, if for nothing else, because of their loneliness. If they can be laid hold of then by the young people of the Church, they readily attach themselves to its activities. If aid can be given at that time in securing the right kind of rooming-places it will help much. If they are led to take a stand for Christ at the very threshold of their college career, the chances are that they will maintain a Christian life throughout the entire course. But

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if they neglect to show their colors at the start, it will be increasingly difficult to get them to do so. If they get in with the wrong kind of a crowd, either in the fraternity life or other associations, they are almost certain to be lost to a Christian life. And if they leave college irreligious, the chances are a hundred to one that they will never become Christians.

The college-going is a time of peculiar testing, if not of peculiar peril. Then, for the first time, the student is thrown entirely upon himself. He is master of his own time. He can choose his own associates. Nobody knows him. The restraints of the community gaze are gone. The home restrictions are left behind. It is a severe test of a youth's moral fiber, and many a one has gone down under it. He needs at this time, therefore, the warmest hand that the Church can extend and the wisest oversight.

Every city Church has a large student contingent. These are in the medical and law schools and business colleges. Yet it is not an overstatement to say that their very existence is unknown to most of the Churches. They do not appear on their horizon. Yet we have found that a systematic and brotherly campaign to bring them into the young men's Bible classes of the Sunday school and into the Church yields magnificent results. Our plan has been to treat them exactly as we treat the young men who were resident to the city. Let them go right into the same classes; let them become just as complete a part of the Church's social life and in every way become articulated with the life of the Church. The dangers we heard prophesied from such a course never materialized. They conducted themselves as gentlemen. They averaged well

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with our home young men. And literally hundreds have gone out from these associations of the Church to be forces for good in towns and cities all over the land, wherever they settle for their careers. And there is no piece of work of all our ministry that we look back to with greater satisfaction than this work, which had no immediate financial returns for the local Church, but which did so much notwithstanding for the building of the Kingdom.

The most important factor in every Church in which we have exercised this ministry for students has been the young men's Bible class, with its own officers, orchestra, social every other month, and annual banquet. Any Church situated within a mile of any colleges can build up this kind of a work.

In view of the strategic importance of medical missions to our foreign missionary propaganda, how can we account ourselves alert for the Kingdom when we fail to lay hold on some of the young men in our nearby medical schools for the work of medical missions? Almost any pastor in a city can get a chance to talk to the medical students; and why not seize the opportunity to put before them the opportunities which medical missions afford for the richest life-investment? We can see him now, that tall, stalwart young fellow pursuing post-graduate work at one of our Missouri schools, as he wrung our hand in parting and said, "I hope it is to be China." We had talked to the student body on "Foreign Missions as a Life-work," and had had a private talk with him. And he signed the students' volunteer card, as many others did, and decided to make foreign missions his life-work.

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It will be remembered that much of Henry Drummond's best work was done in behalf of the medical students of Edinburgh. This princely leader grasped at once the possibilities of this great field and threw himself into it.

In many of the medical schools there are small Young Men's Christian Associations. Through these we pastors have our opportunity of getting at the students, both for the purposes of evangelism and of enlisting volunteers for the mission field. Some of the most fruitful services we have ever held, judged by the number of decisions for Christ, have been in these city medical colleges.

Indeed, the colleges in general constitute the most hopeful field of sane and tactful evangelism anywhere to be found. A thoughtful and spiritual leader can achieve larger results for Christ in a brief time in a series of college meetings than in any other place. One day spent by D. L. Moody at DePauw University when the writer was a student there left an ineffaceable impress upon scores of students and resulted in a new interest in Bible study and in the conversion of many. A member of the Faculty long a skeptic was a trophy of Mr. Moody that day.

One of the most effective features of these services in the colleges is the "Conference Period," where any student is privileged to come to the leader's room, centrally located to be easily accessible, for consultation either concerning his spiritual conditions or his life-work. More than once have we seen the light dawn on seeking souls in these private conferences, and we have reason to believe that not a few received there their vision of service.

CHAPTER XXVII

The Demonstrated Dignity of Rural
Evangelism

“One prayed in vain to paint the vision blest,
Which shone upon his heart by night and day,
But homely duties in his dwelling pressed,
And hungry hearts that would not turn away,
And cares that still his eager hands bade stay.
The canvas never knew the pictured Face,
But year by year, while yet the vision shone,
An angel near him bent to trace
On his own life the Master's image grown
And unto men made known.”

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"THE mark of that man is on me!" So declared Thomas Carlyle. And he was speaking, not, as literary critics would guess, of Goethe, nor of his arch-hero, Cromwell, but of the village preacher at obscure Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, where Carlyle spent his youth.

Of what a host of the leaders in Church and State the same thing is true! A recent investigation in Chicago showed that fifty-nine per cent of its manufacturers, sixty-three per cent of its bankers, seventy-one per cent of its merchants, seventy-two per cent of its lawyers, seventy-eight per cent of its civil engineers, and eighty per cent of its ministers were country-bred.

Most of the cities in the land will show a similar percentage. It is not simply that the country is pouring its population into the city; it is the more significant fact that the simpler life of the country and the more wholesome social and moral ideals have bred a stronger type of men than the more complex and distracting, not to say dissipating, life of the cities.

To catch these lives while they are still in the gristle, before they have hardened into the bone of maturity, is the high privilege of the rural preacher. That large number of ministers who feel disappointed, if not humiliated, at being "read out" for country disappointments, or at re-

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ceiving calls only to rural Churches, are underestimating the possibility and dignity of their field.

Have you ever noted the number of men the country sends into the ministry? Sit in any Annual Conference of the people called Methodists, and however numerous and strong her city Churches may be, it is the village and country Churches that you note furnish the vast majority of the young men coming up for admission to the ministry. In the cities the fascinations of commercialism are too dazzling and omnipresent to permit the glories of the ministry as a calling to be seen.

It is much the same in other denominations. Of four hundred and sixteen men studying for the ministry recently in the Southern Presbyterian Church, two hundred and four were sons of farmers. This does not include those who were sons of country ministers and merchants and other men of country or village callings. Three hundred of these four hundred and sixteen had decided to enter the ministry before entering college. That is to say, almost three-fourths of them made the choice of the ministry under the influence of the home Church and home preacher, and in the majority of cases that pastor was a country preacher.

These conditions alone are sufficient to invest the work of the village and country preacher with superlative significance. If the country preachers are to furnish the faculty for the West Point of the Church—if they are to furnish the leaders of the Kingdom, as they are, to so large an extent—ought we ever again permit a jeremiad rise to our lips concerning the humiliation of a country appointment?

It will be remembered that Charles Kingsley, one

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of England's greatest preachers, spent seventeen years of his ministry at the country town of Eversley. Richard Baxter, one of the greatest divines that Britain ever produced, spent most of his ministry in the obscure village of Kidderminster. When he went there, there was scarcely a home with family prayer; when he left, there was scarcely one without. John Fletcher exercised his immense influence over early Methodism and within the pale of the Anglican Church from the obscure parish of Madeley. And it will be remembered that he resigned a parish, Dunham, paying twice as large a salary, and in a more genteel community, because he believed he could accomplish more for the Kingdom at Madeley. Samuel Rutherford, one of the most distinguished ministers that Scotland ever produced, and whose potent spell has lingered upon the mind of generation after generation of English-speaking preachers, spent practically his entire ministry in the remote country charge of Anwoth. And so far from despising these humble surroundings, he left on record these lines:

“Fair Anwoth by the Solway,
To me thou art still dear,
E'en from the verge of heaven
I drop for thee a tear.

“O! if one soul from Anwoth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My heaven will be two heavens
In Immanuel's Land.”

Yet no pall drops so often and so darkly on the vision of the rank and file of preachers as the suspicion that they have been sent to lead a forlorn hope. Over and over we have heard their plaint: the sparsely-settled

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country region, the mean village, the humble class of parishioners, with nothing either in surroundings or personnel of people to kindle the imagination or inspire high thoughts—this is their burden and their grief.

Yet it is exactly this condition, though it be the forlornest of forlorn hopes, that the courage and vision and initiative of the minister of Christ are to overcome.

The writer's first pastorate was not a rural one; but it was the most desolate field in the Indiana Conference; a little Church in the poorest section of the city of Indianapolis. For years it had been left "to be supplied;" usually by the superannuates, who gave a portion of their time. The building was frame. The surroundings were wretched—the poorest of tenement shacks, and a great mill, with somber chimneys, immediately across the street. Not a new house built in the vicinity in years. The churchyard was full of old cans and broken brick. On the floor of the church were a half-dozen different kinds of carpet and matting patched together. There were sixty-three members, and not one family owned its own home. The salary was three hundred dollars per year. Never had our eyes rested on so desolate a prospect for a Church as there. But we determined to accept the charge as though it were the best in the entire Conference. We adopted as a motto the lines of J. G. Holland:

"To honor God, to benefit mankind,
To serve with lofty gifts the lowly needs
Of that poor race for which the God-man died;
And do it all for love."

Within four years we received eight hundred people into the Church, rebuilt and enlarged the church, gave the nu-

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clei for two new Churches in the region further west, and saw such beauty and blessing come into the lives of hundreds of homes, where parents or children or both were converted at our altars, as repaid us a thousand-fold for our toil. The Church advanced the salary to one thousand dollars cash, and paid it easily and made generous offerings to the benevolences. Young people were sent away to college, several entered the ministry, and a strong, happy, aggressive Church was created, which has been a blessing in that city for a score of years. The result in the pastor's heart was a pastorate of such comfort and gladness, of such tender, mutual love between himself and the noble people who rallied about him and through whom the victory was achieved, as that he looks forward to meeting these people in heaven with the fondest anticipation.

Many men have accomplished much larger things in fields as unpromising. The *Central Christian Advocate* gives the story of an Illinois rural Church to which a young pastor went "as soon as he graduated from McCormick Theological Seminary, and he is there yet. It is ten years since he graduated, and to-day, if you want to address him, you have to put R. F. D. on the envelope. Staying ten years in such a charge, six miles from a railroad, sounds, to start with, as if something had happened. Well, there has. What did this young graduate find? He tells us in a booklet:

"The church and manse lots, enclosed by the remnant of a wire fence, were veritable weed patches. North of the church stood some old, tumble-down sheds, the sight of which made every passer-by shudder and think to himself, 'Surely the Lord hath deserted this place.'"

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The manse had the same neglected appearance, and everything about the place reminded one of a man who had gone away on a long journey and had forgotten to leave any one in care of his sheds. One of the elders, a farmer, had been preaching for three years, or until he died. The last minister had resigned with \$400 back on his salary, which amount the Church borrowed to pay the debt.'

"He tells us that no one had united with the Church in five years; but a clubhouse had been fitted up in the neighborhood to house an organization that called itself 'The New Era Club,' but whose chief object and amusement turned out to be dancing, though its original promoters had hoped for it something better. Many of the young people of the neighborhood, including Church-members, were spending evenings there. The dancing element from the surrounding towns had also begun to frequent the place. He tells us, moreover, that two-thirds of the Sunday school teachers were members of one family.

"The little booklet makes it plain that this particular Church was no exception. It was and it is one of thousands. The trouble with the one is, speaking in general terms, the trouble with all. And we may, therefore, add, the cure for one is practically the cure for all. *What did the young graduate do? He saw the possibilities of country life.*

"He tells how 'one of the good old Scotch elders, they called him "Uncle Dan"—one of the dearest and best of men—put his arm around me one day. It was a way he had of greeting everybody, and he said, very seriously, the tears rolling down his cheeks: "Our young people have got to dancing, and they are being wooed away

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from God and the Church. How are you going to deal with them?"

"I said: 'Uncle Dan, I know from experience that young people will dance if they have nothing better to do. I propose to give them something better.'"

"'Well,' he continued, 'just before you came here our session passed a rule that there was to be no dancing by members of the Church, but I fear there is going to be trouble when we come to enforce it.'"

"I replied again, 'Uncle Dan, it is impossible to shut off a stream entirely unless you give it some other outlet.'"

"He organized a class for an old-fashioned class singing school. Ah, we, too, know what that phrase means, 'the old-fashioned singing school.' The young graduate chose singing because he knew something about singing. His idea was to get the young folks to DOING something. The singing school met one night in the week, in the church. There was some good musical talent among the young folks, and this new enterprise proved to be a great hit. Out of it grew a good, strong chorus choir, a male quartet, a ladies' quartet, an orchestra, and some good soloists. Besides it improved the singing in the church and the Sunday school a hundred per cent.

"He began to observe special days. This kept the musicians busy. When the special days came, the sisters, cousins, aunts, and, better than Pinafore, the grandparents also came out to hear the young folks sing. Next he organized a gospel chorus and went from home to home through the neighborhood singing—especially to the homes of the aged, the sick, those who loved it—and presently they all loved it.

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"Then, tell it in Gath, he organized an athletic 'association.' He organized two baseball teams. They played the neighboring teams, even one from a Church in Chicago. And this Chicago team went down 20 to 0. The Chicago pastor came along with the boys, and when he saw his protégés go down he insisted that this country team had some professionals in it; he was mistaken; they were just the husky farmer lads.

"Well, everything took on new life. The young folks began to talk about reading. They began to talk about college. The Bible class began to grow. A lecture course was organized; even hundred-dollar phenomena were put on the course. A printing-press was bought, and a little Church paper was started. The young people began to develop speakers, who took part in evangelistic meetings.

"And that dancing pavilion? that clubhouse? We almost forgot to speak about it. The young pastor never preached on dancing. He never mentioned it even in private. 'It was simply starved out,' he says. It has been closed for years.

"The finances? They are attended to. The social evenings and events never were organized to make money; they were organized to promote the social life. They succeeded; for in addition to the good support of the pastor, they are now undertaking to support a 'pastor' in the foreign field and a 'pastor' in the home mission field—three in all; and they have a new, modern church there, six miles from the railroad, with a modern auditorium, fourteen rooms in all, separated by accordion doors; a most pleasing interior, stained glass, and Gothic architecture. A library has been started with about a

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thousand volumes, capable of a dozen study courses. The church is a sort of fireside university.

"Well, there you are. And what is there exceptional in this? Nothing at all. Only vision. Only faith in the possibilities of the rural community.

"We repeat: There is no more inviting field in America to-day than the rural Church. Let us get the vision."

From Dr. Charles Roads's prize book on "Rural Christendom" we take these two examples of the possibilities of country Church work, using the Sunday school as the chief base of operations:

"In Nevada, Ohio, a village of nine hundred people (864 by the last census), Mr. Henry Kinzly, a modest grocer in the place, but an earnest Christian, was made superintendent of the Sunday school, one of two there. He found an enrollment of about sixty scholars, but, like a modern business man, he studied this new business for God, thrust upon him, modest as he was and so timid it was almost impossible for him to pray in public. He read books and pamphlets upon methods of Sunday school organization, attended conventions, day by day thought about the school and its possibilities. Almost single-handed he began every movement like house-to-house visitation, Adult Bible Class organization, the Home Department, the Cradle Roll, Decision Day, and so on. He has now enrolled, according to report from him just received, 750, drawing for some on the country outside; 225 conversions have occurred in the Sunday school, 550 have signed the temperance pledge, the saloons have been driven out of the village, a new church building costing \$18,000 has been erected. The other Sunday school also has prospered, and another new church built in the vil-

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lage. When he wanted a home department no one was ready to begin it, so he himself went from house to house; when he wanted new scholars he sought them in the same way. Now he has a beehive of joyous and enthusiastic helpers. His epigrammatic advice is fine: 'If any one should ask me for the best methods to build up Sunday schools and advance Church work, I would say, first, get rid of saloons; second, then get busy.'

"Marburg, Ala., is a village of about four hundred people in which Mr. D. H. Marburg has a Sunday school enrolling 577 people. It is so popular that after having enrolled every soul in the village, crowds for miles from the country round come to it and join it. One old man claiming to be 114 years old is a member of the Organized Adult Class. This school began with eighty, two years before, and it was the house-to-house work under the leadership of one man that accomplished the result.

"In Tennessee is a rural town of about 2,500 people with five Churches, four of which have very active Sunday schools. In one of them an earnest lawyer has gathered a Bible class of men, enrolling 275 and having an attendance of 150. Men are not impossible to attract to the Church when the earnest workers go after them."

At the session of the Dakota Conference in 1910 we heard the astonishing report, during the Conference roll-call, of the gifts for Home and Foreign Missions of the Methodist Church at Wesington Springs, a town of fifteen hundred people. The pastor announced that his Church had given, that year, \$4,260. And his membership was less than four hundred! A talk with the pastor revealed the fact that for five years preceding a gradual advance had been made in the offering for Missions,

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while all the while a campaign of education had been kept up by himself and the pastor who preceded him, both of whom were lovers of missions. There was no man of large wealth in the Church; the giving represented nearly the entire membership. And during this magnificent giving for Missions every other interest of the Church prospered.

At this same Conference a district superintendent reported that a superannuated preacher—mark the adjective—“*superannuated*”—*over or beyond the years* when one is able to work, had gone out to a neglected, Churchless county on the frontier, and had traveled all over the county, visiting from ranch to ranch and house to house, and had gathered the people and their children into schoolhouses and organized them into Sunday schools and Church classes, until a score of such schools and classes covered the county that was supposed to be “impossible” territory for the Church of Christ!

These achievements, not by extraordinary men, but by average men with big determination, and many others of like quality, convince us that no field is impossible. It depends on the man.

We have wandered around the town of Vincennes, Indiana, but we never found any “Alice of Old Vincennes” there; but Maurice Thompson did. We have meandered over the Kentucky hempfields, and we never found any “Reign of Law” there; but James Lane Allen did. We have lingered along Indiana streams and country roads, but we never uncovered any “Old Swimmin’ Hole and Other Poems;” but James Whitcomb Riley did. It depends on the man. And as far as success in God’s work is concerned, it depends not so much on the ability of

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the man as on his determination; for those words of William Arthur should never be forgotten, where he says that the coming of Christ's Kingdom must depend not on enlisting extraordinary men, but on endowing ordinary men with extraordinary power.

It is said that in the South Atlantic some years ago a vessel was driven out of her course by long-continued storms, and lost her reckoning. Provisions ran low, and water was exhausted; and the captain's field-glass anxiously swept the horizon for a sail. When one at length appeared, he put his trumpet to his lips and cried: "Ship ahoy! Give us water!" The answer came back, "Let down your buckets where you are." Thinking they had not understood, the captain cried again: "It's *fresh* water we want! We're dying of thirst!" The answer came back: "Let down your bucket where you are! You're in the mouth of the Amazon, with sixty miles of fresh water on each side of you!"

Profoundly do we believe that there is no field so desolate but that around us are possible trophies for our Lord, and trophies so valuable and with such potent possibilities wrapped up in them as to thrill men and angels when their full realization is accomplished. Out of such obscure and unpromising fields came Matthew Simpson and John P. Durbin and John R. Mott, and Newell Dwight Hillis and Frank W. Gunsaulus, and hosts of great leaders of the Church and State. "*Let down your buckets where you are*"

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Cubic Preacher

“For thence—a paradox,
Which comforts while it mocks—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me.”

(Robert Browning.)

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"ART is long and time is fleeting," sings Longfellow. If that be true—and who will question it?—the life that masters its art most fully is the longest life. Edison has lived longer than Jared, and Phillips Brooks longer than Methuselah. "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay," for Europe's half-century knew more than all Cathay's cycle. "To acquaint one's self with the best the world has thought and said, and thus with the history of the human spirit," is not only culture as Matthew Arnold defines it, but it is also real length of life.

This, then, is the first dimension of the Cubic Preacher—length; that is, knowledge, culture—"the acquainting himself with the best the world has thought and said."

But we must define a little more closely and say that it must be *exact knowledge*. So much that passes for knowledge is guesswork. There never was such a universal smattering of knowledge as now. Newspapers and magazines make that possible. But how much exact knowledge is there? Thomas Edison worked six months on the phonograph, twenty hours a day, to perfect the sibilant. The machine would say "pecie" instead of "specie." Most men would have been content, with all the rest of the alphabet in, to slur the sibilant. "It does n't amount to much, that letter 's'," some one says. No, not much, only the difference between laughter and

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slaughter. And it often means the difference between the laughter of success and the slaughter of failure. "Trifles make perfection; and perfection is no trifle."

Often *just to know* makes one master of a difficult situation. You recall the story of the devil's visit to Cuvier, the eminent naturalist. It was the familiar bovine devil that confronted Cuvier, who asked him what he had come for. "I have come to eat you up," said the adversary. "O, no, you have n't!" was the naturalist's instant reply. "You have horns and hoofs. You are graminivorous, not carnivorous." And the devil fled, put to flight by a scientific fact.

A young Indiana preacher in his first pastorate saw two young people go into trances in his congregation while he was preaching. They were from the families of Church officials. They had been attending the meetings of a trance evangelist, and brought this "superior" manifestation of devotion to the little Methodist Church where the young fellow of twenty-two had charge. The trances brought immediate confusion in the congregation. The people's attention was turned from the sermon, and every one was craning his neck to see what would happen next. The little minister was prepared. As soon as he had heard of the trance evangelist's work he began to read up on trances. He discovered that Mohammed was subject to them, and that in his case they were largely self-induced. He found on scientific authority the means by which they could be induced, and he saw that these methods were being used by the young people in question. He read also that John Wesley never allowed any religious demonstration to disturb the preaching of the Word; that he had ordered the carrying out of women

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who raised a hysterical clamor. So when the young man and young woman went off into trances and disturbed the worship of the congregation, he called on a brother to lead in prayer, and while every one was kneeling he gave the sign to two stalwart officials to carry the trance-smitten youths to the class-rooms, and the service went on as though nothing had happened. And thus ended the trance furore, without injury to Church or preacher.

But knowledge must be not only exact, but *applied*. Augustine Birrell says that 'the scientific man is the only man who has anything to say, but that he does n't know how to say it; and that the literary man is the only man who knows how to say it, but that he has nothing to say.' Now, the preacher who reaches the ear of our generation must have something to say and he must know how to say it. He must be scientific in his knowledge and must use skill in his art. His knowledge must be applied to the case in hand.

All this means that the preacher must work like a slave; for "art is long." Would that it were possible to write a sermon and turn two handsprings before breakfast! But no one can do it except a very young preacher. Thomas Chalmers, when he first started in the ministry, thought he could do that. So he held a professorship of mathematics and preached jaunty sermons on Sunday to the good-natured congregation in Kilmany. "After the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties a minister may enjoy five days in the week of uninterrupted leisure for the prosecution of any science in which his taste may dispose him to engage. . . . The great doctrines of revelation, though sublime, are simple. They require no labor of the midnight oil to understand them. . . .

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There is almost no consumption of intellectual effort in the peculiar employment of the minister.”¹ But when *his spiritual baptism came*, and with it the vision of the needs of men, he resigned his professorship and toiled over his sermons day and night, that he might master the art of persuading men to be reconciled to God.

This means, too, that a preacher must keep learning. Not long before he died, John Richard Green, the eminent English historian, said, “Say of me, ‘He died learning.’” And they put it on his tombstone, as you may see it to-day on the mountain-side at Mentone. “Say of me, ‘He died learning.’”

The preacher who grips his generation to-day must do the same thing. If he considers his education “finished” when he completes his college or seminary course, of the four years’ Conference course, woe be to him! One woe may be past, as the revelator says, but “there come yet two woes hereafter.” We have seen preachers, the toboggan trend of whose appointments we could not understand until we stood in their libraries. “Then understood I their end.” It was “the abomination of desolation of which Daniel the prophet spake.” Not one new, fresh, vitalizing book. Old encyclopedias and books of illustration, and other men’s sermon skeletons. By the way, other preachers’ sermon notes are the “skeleton in the closet” of many a failing preacher. The “dead line” in the ministry has two ends—one in the heart, from shriveling of sympathies; the other in the head, from atrophy of gray matter. Men like P. S. Henson and Henry White Warren, trailing clouds of glory after them

¹ Fraser’s “Life of Chalmers,” page 31.

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while marching into the eighties, tell us without saying a word how to avoid the dead line.

A liberal education may be said to consist of (1) the ability to think at a mark. Concentrated thinking will bore through the steel plate of any problem. The shells of the Japanese gunners all struck a Russian battleship within a spot twelve feet spare. Nothing could stand that sort of hammering. You have known preaching that was not characterized by such focal firing. "Firstly," as the brother remarked, "he took a text; secondly, he departed from it; thirdly, he never came back to it." We heard Randolph Foster preach a sermon on "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He disclaimed any purpose to appeal in any way to the emotions. He wanted to reason the subject through with his hearers. But the boring of his shells so heated his audience that it took fire by spontaneous combustion and men stood up and wept for joy. (2) Knowing where to find things. You have had some one come into your library and ask, "My! have you read all these books?" It is not necessary that you should have read them all. All that is necessary is that you know where to find what you want. And if your bibliography extends further than your own book-shelves out to the world's great book-shelves, you are a well-trained mind. (3) The passion to learn. This is most important of all. With this your man who never crossed a college threshold outstrips the graduates of a half dozen universities who failed to include that when they packed their saddle-bags. Your B. F. Cocker comes to town from the Australian wilds,

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a local preacher supply, and is sent out on Brush Circuit. But in a dozen years or so he is sitting in the chair of mental and moral philosophy in the Michigan State University. And "where McGregor sits is the head of the table." Unfortunately so many of us are like the small boy who, when asked how he happened to fall out of bed, answered, "I went to sleep so near where I got in!" In every other field of investigation and in every other art we have a generation of specialists. If the preacher is to hold the respect of men, and is to be able to help them, he must be as pronounced a specialist in his field as they are in theirs.

But in his search for truth among seas and stars he must not forget the man at his elbow. There must be *breadth* of sympathy as well as length of learning.

The Rev. Dr. A. J. Lyman tells how he had been preaching a series of sermons on "The Parables." A good parishioner took him home to dinner one day after preaching. Turning to his little daughter, the parishioner asked, "And now, Sadie, can you tell me what a parable is?" "Yes, sir," said Sadie, in the most respectful of tones; "a parable is a heavenly truth without any earthly meaning." The little girl did not understand the burst that followed. Dr. Lyman says, "I understood, however, and burnt that sermon."

Our learning is all for naught if we can not bring it into sympathetic articulation with the needs of our people. There must be length, but there must also be "breadth," sympathy. There must be the disposition and the power to relate the message to the daily lives of all sorts and conditions of men. With ministers more than

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with any other class of men there is a tendency to live in a world apart. Cherishing lofty sentiments, living in the realm of the ideal, our danger is of getting out of touch with the rank and file of men—especially with the unattractive and morally repulsive. John Eliot the great apostle to the Indians employed his last hours of life and strength in teaching a little half-naked Indian child his letters. If John Richard Green “died learning,” John Eliot died teaching—an even nobler thing, when it means the uplift of the lowly. To us preachers, above all other men, it is given to see the potential grandeur of every life, however obscure; and we are to lay hold of every opportunity to influence it as one seizes hidden treasure. In one of his exasperated moods Thomas Carlyle wrote, “England has twenty million people, mostly fools.” Occasionally a preacher feels like that. When he does, let him hurry home and have his wife lock him up until sanity returns; otherwise he is likely to do more harm in five minutes than he can do good in five months. People are quick to detect a lack of heart. And with them that is the unpardonable sin. If Carlyle had said, “There are twenty millions of people in England, mostly sufferers,” he would have come nearer the truth, as Nelson Greene well says. Pretty nearly every one has some burden, and many have heart-aches which they do not wear on their sleeve. And the preacher whose heart beats in genuine, manly sympathy with them is the man they will listen to and follow. Charles T. Allen spent his lifetime’s ministry in the Detroit District and in its best Churches, the same Churches asking for him again and again. And the secret of it was his great-heartedness.

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It was no affectation. That veneer soon wears through. "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all the people all the time."

We have observed that the big business men, as a rule, are not much moved by men who are interested only in big business men. It is the man whose sympathies are as broad as the multiform types of life about him who gets a hold upon their confidence. Perhaps there is scarcely a minister in the State of Michigan who has as great a hold upon the business men of that State as has Tracy McGregor, of Detroit, who has given the best twenty years of his life to the poorest riff-raff of that city. Cultivated, courteous, magnetic, this young man could have had the best that the world has to offer; but he chose to care for the tramps and other poor waifs of Detroit, caring for both their souls and bodies, and now young McGregor is a potential social and spiritual force in the life of that great city.

Christianity has evolved a new type of conscience—the *social conscience*. Out of the confusion of conflicting interests is emerging a new sense of social obligation. And much of our thought and effort as preachers must be given to clarifying and enforcing the social message of Christianity. The brotherhood teachings of Jesus are compelling this. While the predominant message of Christianity has not to do with industrial or civic matters, yet that kingdom we are establishing on earth is a kingdom of justice as well as of peace: "the Kingdom of God is righteousness" as well as "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." And to that large part of the Church, as of so-

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ciety in general, which is always more swift to claim its rights than it is to recognize its obligations, we must with line upon line and precept upon precept declare the social, brotherhood message of the gospel. If the Christianity of the future is to be more than a religion of the well-to-do, there must be a vast infusion of the warm, red blood of Christ's sympathies. Nothing more absolutely distinguished Jesus from other great world leaders than His attitude toward the masses of men. Of the complaining poor, Plato said, "Let such cattle be driven from the market-place." But when Jesus "saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion toward them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd." "Let the common herd eat grass," said a French nobleman just before the Revolution; and of Napoleon it is said that "he was not blood-thirsty, but pitiless." But when Jesus saw the multitudes He had compassion on them. "I hate the vulgar crowd, and I keep them at a distance," said a great ancient poet. But Jesus "had compassion on them."

"O dearly, dearly hath He loved;
And we must love *them*, too;
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And strive His work to do."

If the great crowds cry, "Show us your hands," as they cried to the feigned Messiah in that English city, we must be able to show in our hands the marks of the Lord Jesus' sympathy and compassion for needy men. Love is the elemental passion in soul-winning. Maltbie Babcock and J. O. Peck and D. L. Moody and all the great soul-winners overflowed with it, and it will make

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our ministry potential also with Christ's own winsomeness.

It has been said that a great life is a noble ideal conceived in the enthusiasm of youth and carried out in the strength of maturity. The "noble ideals of youth:" we all know what that means. But the carrying out in the strength of maturity! "Ah! there's the rub!"

"The youth, who . . . still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day."

Table Rock, on Mackinac Island, registers the furrows of waves sixty feet above the present level of Lake Michigan. It is so with the ideals of youth with many men. They have dropped down from that high life-level. "O! that was a boy's dream!" they say. No, it was a boy's day. And we preachers, whose business it is to see that the ideal and perfect never die from out the hearts of men, are to carry out these noble ideals "in the strength of maturity."

That means not only a "long" life and a "broad" life, but a *high* life. "The length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal." It was the Holy City, the heavenly Jerusalem, of which John was writing; but he was writing also of the men who are to bring down that holy city from heaven to earth. Ours must be the cubic life—the threefold passion: the passion for truth, the passion for men, and the passion for God.

The passion for God bursts out among the high hills of prayer and devotion, and it flows down, a hundred beneficent streams of service, into the valley as a passion

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for men, and makes glad all the cities of our God. The passion for truth, the passion for men, the passion for God: these make the Cubic Preacher. We must pore over the best books, "the precious life-blood of master spirits;" we must toil over our sermons as steel-molders toil at their furnaces; we must keep in close touch with our fellows, dealing with them one by one, reverently and tenderly, as immortal souls and unspeakable potentialities of grace. But when we have done all that, it is still the touch of the Master's hand that must give us power. "Not by might, nor by power, but My Spirit, saith the Lord."

Eighty years ago an old fiddler sat on a London bridge sawing away on his violin. But the people swept past him without heeding. His old hat lay on the boards beside him empty. The old man played on, but the hope had been sucked out of his face as light from the sky when the sun drops behind the hills; and his eyes had in them despair. Just then a stranger stopped and said, "Let me have the violin." And the stranger began a plaintive strain that stopped passers-by with its beauty, and in a moment a dozen men were there. In a minute more a score had stopped to listen. The old bridge policeman drew near to see what was the trouble and forgot to ask them to move on, for his heart was smitten by the pathos of the melody, and he brushed a tear from his eye. In a few minutes a throng had gathered, and coins were raining in the old musician's hat, while tears were chasing down his face. When the stranger ceased, as with one voice the crowd cried out, "Paganini! Paganini!" It was Paganini, the world's greatest master in music.

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When we have done our highest and best we are still helpless men on this bridge between time and eternity, "crying aloud into the teeth of a hurricane," as a New York Episcopalian bishop said, until the Master comes by and takes the instrument and touches it with His magic. Then men stop and listen, and yield, and cry with one of old who long had doubted, "My Lord and My God!"

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